

STATE DEFENSE FORCE MANPOWER REMEDY IGNORED BY NATIONAL LEADERS^{1,2}

Colonel John R. Brinkerhoff (RET), USA

Five years ago I addressed the State Guard Association Annual Conference in Charleston. At that time I spoke to the urgent need for tens of thousands of organized, disciplined, trained, and armed militia members to augment the National Guards of their respective states. I said that there would be emergencies that would require large numbers of armed personnel to provide for crowd control, evacuation, and maintenance of law and order. I urged the White House, Department of Defense, Department of Homeland Security, and Governors of the several states to take advantage of the low cost state defense forces to provide additional troops when needed. I charged the State Guard Association with the mission of reviving the State Defense Forces for Homeland Security. I assigned myself the same mission.

I have the unpleasant duty to tell you that I have failed, you have failed, we all have failed to accomplish the mission. In 2002, there were 11,000 active SDF personnel in 16 states and Puerto Rico. In 2007, there are 20,000 active SDF personnel in 24 states and Puerto Rico. This is some progress, but it is not enough.

There are still 26 states without state defense forces. Many of the existing state defense forces still consist mostly of senior officers and senior NCOs. Most states do not permit their state defense force members to bear arms. Some states keep their SDF units in cadre status. Not a single state has a state defense force that can provide an adequate number of organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops to deal with a nuclear attack, an influenza pandemic, another Category Five Hurricane, a catastrophic earthquake in Missouri, or any other catastrophic emergency.

We tried. Many of you stepped up to the task and tried to gain support. Hall Worthington, Jack McNiff, Ron Markarian, Al Zapanta, John Stone, and many others of you spent valuable time in visiting the folks at the National Guard Bureau, the DOD, DHS, and the Congress. A lot of time and effort was expended.

We failed. We were unable to persuade the Federal government to take this program seriously. Despite excellent support from numerous members of Congress, we were unable to persuade Congress to enact the Home Defense Forces Improvement bill. We were unable to persuade many of the governors and their adjutants general to support the SDF. It is a sad fact that after five years of effort, most senior people in the Federal Government still have not even heard about the state defense forces.

Who opposed the SDF? As the Lord High Executioner said in *The Mikado*, I have a little list.

¹ The Role of the State Defense Forces in Homeland Security was presented as an address to the State Guard Association of the United States National Conference, Indianapolis, Indiana, 2007. The author required that several changes be made to the text for publication purposes.

² Reprinted courtesy of U.S. Freedom Foundation, all rights reserved.

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE 2007	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2007 to 00-00-2007			
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE State Defense Force Manpower Remedy Ignored by National Leaders		5a. CONTRACT NUMBER			
		5b. GRANT NUMBER			
		5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER			
6. AUTHOR(S)		5d. PROJECT NUMBER			
		5e. TASK NUMBER			
		5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER			
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) State Defense Force Publication Center, 19819 Maycrest Way, Germantown, MD, 20876-6339		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER			
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)		10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)			
		11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)			
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES See also ADA494467. Pub in: State Defense Force Monograph Series, Fall 2007, Special Units. © 2008 State Defense Forces Publications Center. Creative Commons Attribution License.					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 12	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Strangely, the most fervent opposition to a robust SDF came from four groups that have most to gain from a robust SDF: The National Guard Bureau, Department of Defense, National Guard Association of the US, and the Adjutant Generals Association.

The most disappointing organization has been the National Guard Bureau. Although the Chief, of the NGB still has responsibility for oversight of the SDT, nothing has been done so create an effective SDF program. We visited the NGB several times but to no avail. There was no interest in NGB to have a strong SDF. That meant that there has been no advocate for SDF inside DOD. Lack of NGB support has blocked progress and made it hard to obtain arms, equipment, and training support from DOD. In other respects, the National Guard has done a magnificent job in supporting overseas operations and providing for homeland security. The impromptu marshaling of NG units from other states to provide a timely military presence for the Katrina response was brilliant. The role, resources, and respect for the National Guard has grown. But The National Guard Bureau has failed us and the Nation by not finding time and energy to support a strong SDF.

Another big disappointment has been the Office of the Secretary of Defense—OSD. I visited a group of deputy assistant secretaries in the Reserve Affairs Office and presented the case for the SDF. Since I knew these people, had worked with them before, and was during my own career the acting deputy assistant secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, I assumed that they would agree with me that the need was important and that reviving to SDF to provide augmentation for the National Guard would be an easy sell. Instead, I was rebuffed rudely and my proposal was ridiculed. I can tell you I was not only disappointed but humiliated. These people laughed at the idea of allowing people like you to bear arms in defense of your home states. They have chosen instead to advocate a volunteer civilian reserve program that would stockpile specialists that could augment the military forces when needed. These civilians would, of course, be unarmed. That went nowhere, but so did DOD support for the SDF.

I also tried to get the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense to become our champion. The staff officers there were unwilling even to raise this issue with the Assistant Secretary because they told me that he had a bad experience with a senior officer of the New York Naval Militia officer right after the 911 attacks and was dead set against the SDF.

The National Guard Association did not help us. I went to the leaders of this organization and begged for their support. They turned me down and treated me to a recitation of the customary anecdotes about renegade militias and too many generals and colonels. I did hope that the NGAUS could see the merit in the SDF, but they did not then and do not to this day.

The greatest obstacle to the development of a strong SDF has been the Adjutant General Association composed of all 54 adjutants general. Even though half of the TAGs have SDF units under their command, the association has opposed the expansion of the SDF. This is a case of unwarranted solidarity that does damage to the SDF program.

Only one organization in DOD provided significant support for the SDF. The Reserve Forces Policy Board under the leadership of Al Zapanta worked hard on our behalf. Al was a magnificent leader and along with Bob Fiedler and others on his staff, was untiring in his support for the SDF. The RFPB sponsored a major event in Washington DC that ought to have sparked some interest and, but the RFBB could not prevail over the anti-SDF attitudes of officials in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

We also tried to elicit support from several of the Washington think tanks and military organizations. This effort was not successful. Most of the organizations had no idea of what we were talking about. Each had an agenda to promote and was unwilling to take on another issue. One major think tank agreed with the need for more armed troops, but wanted a federal force under DHS control instead of state troops under control of the Governors. Many simply were unwilling to credit the thought that you SDF people could be trusted to bear arms in defense of your localities.

We did try to obtain support from the Department of Homeland Security. Hall, Jack, and I visited a senior official at DHS headquarters, met with him, and never heard from him again. I recently raised the issue with senior people in FEMA and also in DHS headquarters, to no avail.

At this point it is probably a good idea to say to the representatives of the organizations that I have cited for failing to support a robust SDF program that there is nothing personal about my remarks. As Tony Soprano might say, it is just business. Actually, I speak more in sorrow than in anger. It is just that it is hard to understand why any sensible person can oppose this legal and inexpensive expansion of the Nation's military forces in a time of grave danger.

WELL, WHAT IS THAT DANGER?

There is a significant probability of another catastrophic emergency in the near future, whether it is a terrorist attack or a natural disaster. I have spent a great amount of my time in the past five years analyzing these catastrophic emergencies. A catastrophic incident or emergency is defined in the National Response Plan as follows:

Any natural or manmade incident, including terrorism, that results in extraordinary levels of mass casualties, damage or disruption severely affecting the population, infrastructure, environment, economy, national morale, and/or government functions. A catastrophic event could result in sustained national impacts over a prolonged period of time; almost immediately exceeds resources normally available to State, local, tribal, and private-sector authorities in the impact area; and significantly interrupts government operations and emergency services to such an extent that national security would be threatened.

The Catastrophic Incident Supplement to the NRP says further that a catastrophic emergency will require immediate and proactive action by the Federal Government.

I am going to discuss five potential catastrophic emergencies in brief. The scenarios I will mention are a nuclear attack, an influenza pandemic, the New Madrid Earthquake, a prolonged power outage in a metropolitan area, and prolonged disruption of electronic communications.

A Nuclear Detonation

The most serious threat is a nuclear attack on a major metropolitan area. This is Scenario Number one of the fifteen standard national planning scenarios issued by the Homeland Security Council to provide a common basis for national planning and preparedness.

The concept of operations for managing the consequences of a nuclear detonation calls for organizing the space around the point of detonation into three zones.

The Primary Zone will encompass the direct blast and thermal effects of the detonation and also the primary alpha, gamma, and beta radiation. During the response, this Primary Zone will be defined and sealed off with a cordon to prevent egress by untrained and unequipped persons and to receive and process survivors who can leave the primary zone. The Primary Zone will contain the bulk of the structural damage and the immediate fires from the thermal effects, although there may be secondary fires outside the Primary Zone. For a 10kt weapon, the Primary Zone will have a radius of about two miles. Depending on population density for a city and the time of detonation, about 200,000 people will be killed inside the Primary Zone. In effect, the idea is to lay siege to the Primary Zone and move the perimeter inward as the radiation decays.

The Fallout Zone will encompass the area affected by gamma radiation emanating from fallout particles borne aloft. The explosion will cause small particles to be borne by winds aloft downwind and deposited there. The radiation intensity is greatest near the point of detonation and decreases thereafter. There is no physical damage in the Fallout Zone. Again depending on population density, there could be about one million people or more who have to take shelter or evacuate the Fallout Zone. The major thrust of the entire response operation is to help these million people avoid a dangerous dose of ionizing radiation. That means that we have to be able to measure the intensity of radiation, predict the path of the fallout plume, and establish cordons around the Fallout Zone to prevent people from moving into the radiation and provide a means of processing, decontaminating, and treating people who evacuate the Fallout Zone. We advocate a mixed survival strategy for people in the Fallout Zone that includes both sheltering and evacuation in an orderly manner. This requires that we be able to communicate with the people and conduct a phased evacuation. For a 10kt weapon, the length of the Fallout Zone could be as great as 200 miles. The idea is to get as many people as possible out of the zone before they receive a dangerous dose of ionizing radiation.

There is also a Secondary Zone that will serve as a base area to support the response operation and to shelter the people who are evacuated from the Fallout Zone. This area will also be cordoned off to limit the movement of evacuees, who might be suffering from radiation illness from leaving the Secondary Zone and to prevent entry into the Secondary Zone of unauthorized persons who will increase workload in that zone and complicate the working of the response operation. The secondary zone population could be as much as six million people, who would have to be able to accommodate the one million refugees. The idea is to limit the effects of the explosion so that the rest of the Nation will not be impacted.

The parts of the United States outside the Secondary Zone will be in a state of increased alert and even panic. Authorities will anticipate a second attack and citizens will be afraid. This means that lateral reinforcement programs such as the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) that draws forces from other states will not work.

Managing the response to this nuclear detonation will require 200,000 or more organized, trained, and disciplined responders, about half of whom would have to be armed to do their jobs. Armed personnel are needed to form and enforce the cordons around the Primary Zone, Fallout Zone, and Secondary Zone, to manage the evacuation, secure response personnel processing evacuees, protect shelters and camps for evacuees, and maintain law and order within the Secondary Zone. This demand can be met only by law enforcement officers, active duty and reserve military troops, National Guard troops, and armed members of State Defense Forces.

In the response to a nuclear detonation, the first few hours are of critical importance. The response operation will essentially be over after the first 48 hours. All who can be saved will have been saved by that time. The rest will die of injuries or exposure to radiation—sooner or later. This reality places a premium on rapid response. The first actions will be taken by the local responders. The initial reinforcements will be state resources, including nearby National Guard elements and SDF units. Federal resources will arrive on the scene as rapidly as they can. They cannot wait until asked for but must proceed instantly and automatically as soon as the nuclear weapon detonates.

At present there are too few organized, trained, and disciplined responders available to meet the demand in the first 48 hours. There are not going to be enough armed troops available rapidly to provide an adequate response when they are needed most. Filling that gap in armed responders is the duty of the State Defense Forces. Local militia units organized, equipped, trained, and armed can provide what is essential for the first hours after a nuclear detonation. Acting on pre-scripted assignments, these units can help the local and state police set up the cordons, patrol the evacuation routes, respond to civil unrest, and secure key facilities. It might be possible also to enable the local SDF units to help in measuring radiation intensity and delivering emergency public information. This is the most demanding emergency the nation faces.

The Government is making a great effort to interdict nuclear weapons before they can get into the United States. However, let me tell you that it would be foolish to assume that dedicated terrorists would not try to do this. It would be doubly foolish to assume they cannot succeed. If they do detonate a nuclear weapon in the United States, and we have not prepared to minimize the effects of the explosion, we will have failed the nation.

I want to explore for a minute why we do not prepare for this emergency or for other catastrophic emergencies. It is a matter of attitude. Many people would rather deal with the known and familiar hazards and are reluctant to address the big ones. It was obvious for years that a Category Four Hurricane would strike New Orleans and that the levees were weak, but only a few hard core members of the Emergency Management Community took that possibility seriously.

I want to share with you're a story that illustrates the difficulty of getting people to support an armed SDF.

In November 2005 I went to Columbus, Ohio at the request of Michael Moran, a member of the Ohio Military Reserve Association, to support the efforts of Moran and others to improve the Ohio Military Reserve. The occasion was a hearing of the Ohio Military Reserve and Homeland Security Study Commission. The objective of this exercise was to persuade the Ohio General Assembly to provide for modernizing the authorizing legislation for the Ohio Military Reserve and provide funding for expansion of the strength of that organization. My role was to testify before the Commission and advise them of the need for Ohio to have a strong SDF. The Commission included the Director of Homeland Security, the Adjutant General, Director of Public Safety, two Senators, and three Representatives.

I told the Commission that a strong, organized, disciplined, trained, and armed Ohio Military Reserve was essential in an age of terrorism. I spoke about the effects of a 10kt nuclear detonation in Chicago. I explained that the Fallout Zone for such an attack would extend eastward from Chicago across Northern Indiana and Ohio to Toledo, Ohio. Thousands of Hoosiers and Ohioans would be fleeing southward to escape the radiation threat. I had done my homework and pointed out that the combined resources available to the Governor of Ohio in the form of state police and National Guard

would be inadequate to manage that situation. I said the Ohio needed a strong, armed SDF of tens of thousands of armed troops to deal with that kind of emergency. I also noted that such a volunteer force would be of great value to Ohio for lesser emergencies.

The efforts Mike Moran and his colleagues were to no avail. The leadership of Ohio would not support a strong SDF. All that Moran wanted was to achieve legitimacy and have a cadre force of about 1,500 unarmed members and a miniscule budget. I had suggested an armed force of about 30,000. None of this was achieved. The Commission decided not to do anything for the Ohio Military Reserve. The greatest opponent of the enhanced SDF for Ohio was the Adjutant General, who said that he could do it all with the National Guard and did not need any help. I was distressed by this view. Upon reflection, I concluded that in addition to turf and money problems, the Adjutant General and most of the others did not believe there would ever be a nuclear attack in Chicago.

The problem is with attitude. Complacency is not a virtue for those charged with defending the United States. To be truly effective, responders have to believe that emergencies will truly occur.

Influenza Pandemic

An Influenza Pandemic with the Avian Flu H5N1 virus could be more devastating than even a nuclear detonation. We know the Avian Flu virus has infected a lot of birds and that it has already been transmitted from birds to other animals and in a few cases from birds and animals to humans. When that happens, it is possible for the Avian Flu to affect the entire country very quickly. The pandemic will spread in two waves. The first wave will last about three months and attack mostly healthy young adults. There will be an inter-pandemic period of about three months, and then the second wave will start and last about two months and attack mostly older adults. As it spreads, the virus will mutate and shift to new forms that cannot be predicted in advance but can be determined only by isolating and identifying each new strain. Depending on the number of patients that become infected, the effects will range from 90,000 to 210,000 dead, 300,000 to 700,000 hospitalizations, 18 million to 40 million outpatients, and total infections of from 38 million to 93 million people. Whether the workload is the upper limit or the lower limit or something in between depends on how the response is conducted.

The public health and health care delivery system cannot deal effectively with this kind of pandemic. Vaccinations will not stop the spread of the disease because the correct vaccine cannot be made until the exact virus is identified. Once the causal virus is isolated, it will take six to nine months to produce the appropriate vaccine. Even if an H5N1 vaccine is stockpiled in advance, it might not be effective. Even if it is effective, it will be impossible to vaccinate more than about 10% of the population.

The public health and health care delivery systems will be overwhelmed. The number of physicians, nurses, and other health care professionals is finite and cannot be expanded enough to cope with the workload. The number of hospital beds with supporting paraphernalia in the United States is also finite, and there will be too few beds to cope with the workload. There are only about one million hospital beds in the United States, and almost all of these are already occupied.

Medical professionals realize they cannot stop this pandemic. Their best advice is to wear a mask and wash your hands frequently. Even the palliative medicines, such as TamiFlu are inadequate to the task.

This means that a major emphasis has to be made on stopping the transmission of the virus and reducing the rates of infection at least to a manageable level and perhaps stopping the spread of the virus entirely. The experience with the Spanish Influenza Pandemic of 1918 suggests that quarantine or isolation works well in stopping the spread of the disease.

Present plans call for states to call for voluntary quarantines. I suspect that in the real event, the states will impose mandatory quarantines. When quarantine is imposed, the major problems are how to sustain the people after stocks of food are exhausted, how to distribute medicines, and how to perform vaccinations. Doing these things will be a major challenge for emergency managers and medical people.

The law enforcement community with the help of the National Guard and State Defense Forces will have to enforce the quarantines and maintain law and order. Foolish people will refuse to obey the rules of the quarantine and wander about carelessly spreading the virus. Desperate people will use force to obtain scarce vaccines and medicines. Hungry people will take it upon themselves to obtain food for themselves and their families. Angry people will take out their anger on medical and other people trying to help them. Criminals and street gangs will take advantage of the situation to enrich themselves.

During such a pandemic each governor will need a large number of organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops to help law enforcement agencies enforce the quarantines and provide security for those who the spread of the disease and see that supplies of scarce commodities are distributed fairly to all. A strong SDF will be needed.

The New Madrid Earthquake

This is a very real possibility. If a magnitude 8.0 earthquake occurs along the central portion of the Mississippi River Valley, the consequences would be wide-ranging and serious. This has been a concern of emergency managers for years, and FEMA is now engaged in preparing a plan to deal with it.

The consequences will be severe. All the bridges across the Mississippi River from Cairo to St Louis will be down. Roads and bridges in seven states will be damaged. Pipelines and electrical cables will be down. Transportation will be at a standstill. Millions of people will be left without essential services. Thousands will be injured by collapsing structures, and many more will be left temporarily homeless. The damage and disruption will be great.

A good concept for managing this catastrophic emergency is to ask all residents to remain in their localities instead of trying to move outside of the affected area. Search and rescue operations will be conducted on a local basis, and localities will have to deal with casualties from the effects of the earthquake. Essential supplies and services and additional responders would be brought into the affected states from outside private sector and federal resources and private sector resources under Federal management. This will preclude having thousands of persons on the highways trying to leave and making it difficult for outside help to get to the survivors inside the affected states.

In this kind of situation, there will be numerous instances of violence. The local police will be overwhelmed, and the governors of the affected states will have to provide National Guard and SDF forces to assist in the immediate response tasks and in the subsequent delivery and distribution of essential goods and services. While Federal forces will be used, much of their effort will be on the logistics of providing support. Responsibility for maintaining law and order and securing the responders

will fall on the governors. They will need to have strong SDF units with organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops to augment the police and National Guard forces.

A Prolonged Power Outage

It would be relatively easy for a terrorist group to cause a widespread power outage either by physical means or by a cyber attack. If this occurs, there would be widespread disruption of essential services and distribution of essential goods. We all depend on electrical power for what we do. We cannot pump gas without power. We cannot work in offices, keep cool, or keep warm without power. We cannot communicate or do business without power.

If such an outage lasts for a few hours, it is a nuisance. If the outage lasts a few days, it is an irritant. If the outage lasts for a few weeks, it is an emergency. If the outage extends over a large region, those in the interior will not have recourse to support from areas with power. A few families and a few businesses will have backup generators. People living in houses with solar panels can get by. But the rest of us will have to do without.

Imagine if you will what your neighborhood would be like if the power were out for six weeks. Cars will run out of gas. Food would spoil. Neighbors could turn mean. Street gangs could rove the streets doing bad things. After food, water, and medicine, your most important need would be for security, which can be provided only by the police or troops.

The concept of the response operation for this catastrophic emergency is to provide essential survival goods—food, water, and medicine—to those without power. The policy will be to ask people to stay in their homes and wait for help to come to them. Large numbers of people will try to self-evacuate to areas with power, thus impeding the influx of supplies and workers and equipment to restore the power supply. So a major challenge for the authorities will be to enforce the stay in place policy, assure fair distribution of essential supplies, and maintain law and order. The police will be overwhelmed. Governors will have to deploy their National Guard and State Defense Forces to augment the police within their respective states.

A Prolonged Disruption of Electronic Communications

The final catastrophic emergency I will address is a prolonged disruption of electronic communications. This would be similar to the prolonged power outage but greater in scope and even more disastrous in its consequences. It is possible to survive for a time without power using the old fashioned way. Few of you can even envision what it would be like to live without the internet and cell phones for a long time.

We are very vulnerable to the failure of electronic devices. We have abandoned the old methods that were used before electronic devices appeared. Most of us have lost the skills necessary to function in a non-electronic world.

As a society we have become very dependent, perhaps overly dependent on the internet and electronic systems to manage data and to communicate. When those systems fail massively it would be a catastrophic emergency.

It is no secret that our systems are subjected to millions of cyber attacks daily. Most of these are thwarted before they can do great harm, but some do cause damage and money.

If our economy and society are suddenly deprived of electronic communications, the disruption of will provoke disorder and provide a fertile field for criminals and some normally law abiding citizens driven to rage by frustration. This condition on a regional or national basis will soon become too hard for the police, and troops will be needed to help maintain order and provide security while we reestablish systems and learn to cope with a world without the internet, cell phones, and electronic systems of all kinds. This is yet another situation for which the existing of a strong SDF with organized, disciplined, trained and armed troops would be very useful.

There are other catastrophic and lesser emergencies in which the SDF can play an important role. But in order to have an adequate SDF, some things have to be done.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

There certainly is a persuasive case for having a large number of SDF troops available to the Governors to deal with catastrophic emergencies as well as lesser emergencies. It is up to all of us to see that this case is made the basis for persuading the governors to sponsor and fund such a program.

I will address three of the controversial issues that plague the SDF community. They are whether the SDF is to be armed or not; whether the SDF is to be a cadre or at full strength; and the overall strength of the SDF.

Arming the State Defense Forces

To Arm or not to Arm? That is the question that gets to the bottom of what the SDF is to be. Some TAGs want the SDF to be nothing more than a source of low-cost help to perform administrative work and provide support services. They perceive the proper role of the SDF is to do some low priority programs for the Guard such as taking care of the armories—sort of a supplementary caretaker group. That is not my image. An unarmed SDF cannot perform the security and response missions for which the SDF is needed and which is the sole basis for having the SDF in the first place. An unarmed militia is an oxymoron.

Except for the Naval Militia, which truly has the right idea on this issue, none of the numerous competing volunteer organizations envision arming their members. They resemble what we old soldiers would characterize as camp followers whose duties were to wash the clothes and cook the food for those in the ranks. Indeed, it may be a good idea to provide unarmed civilians to provide some of the support for the National Guard that DOD has failed to provide, but that is not the proper role of the State Defense Forces.

The Nation has many law enforcement officers to enforce the law and maintain order. There are about a million sworn police officers in the United States. This number has remained stable for a decade despite increasing population and crime. There are also almost a million criminals and members of violent street gangs in the United States. The balance between the cops and the criminals is precarious even in normal times. When a catastrophic emergency occurs, the police will need help. That help can be provided only by military forces trained and armed to perform security duty. These military forces can come from Federal active duty and reserve units, from the National Guards of the several states, and

from the State Defense forces—provided the SDF troops are trained and equipped with weapons appropriate for their role.

Numerous other volunteer organizations exist to provide specialized services for emergency response. The Red Cross is one. The Disaster Response Medical System is another. The Neighborhood Watch is still another. The Civil Air Patrol and the Coast Guard Auxiliary perform valuable services and can do so without being armed. The Citizen Corps sponsored by DHS offers willing Americans an opportunity to participate in Homeland Security programs by performing a variety of jobs—none of which require them to be armed. If an individual objects to serving in an armed force, he or she should join one of these civilian organizations.

Often, when I mention the need for armed SDF, someone says that you SDF members are not to be trusted with weapons. One retired regular major general said he doubted whether you SDF members would be capable or qualifying with your weapons on a range. Another senior person said that arming you would be a threat to the nation. Many members of the National Guard and some Adjutants General with SDF units oppose arming your troops.

Those who oppose arming the SDF also offer some practical objections. There is the additional burden of storing arms and ammunition, conducting weapons training, and assuring that weapons safety is maintained. Some fear consequences of accidents and the liability issues that could result from them. Some fear that armed militia men will go on a rampage in the woods and kill or wound civilians. These arguments appear to be excuses to avoid arming the SDF. These same objections apply to the National Guard itself. None of the objections are sufficient reason either to disarm the National Guard or deny weapons to the SDF.

All of these are excuses to avoid arming the SDF, but they are not good enough to offset the need for organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops when they are. Such arguments reflect badly on you. You have among your ranks veterans of active and reserve duty with many years of military service and experience. How do you feel about being labeled as either too incompetent or too untrustworthy or both to command and train your soldiers to bear arms in defense of the Nation?

The US is awash with handguns, rifles, and even some heavy weapons in the hands of gangs, illegal militias, and other unauthorized criminal groups. The bad guys will have arms, and experience indicates they will use them for their own advantage. Sworn law enforcement officers are responsible for maintaining law and order, but there will be too few of them to maintain law and order during and after a catastrophic emergency. National Guard troops will have arms, but they also will be too few to do it all during and after a catastrophic emergency. Federal troops will be armed, but they will arrive at the scene after a delay. The need is for more organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops—and that is the role of the SDF.

I said before and I say again that sending unarmed SDF troops out to enforce cordons, secure critical assets, manage evacuations, provide security for firefighters and medical teams, and suppress civil disorders would amount to criminal negligence.

Finally, I ask that you ponder this proposition. It is far better to have arms and not need them than to need arms and not have them.

Cadres or Full Strength?

I note with sadness and disbelief that some states have adopted a policy of maintaining their SDF units at cadre strength with the expectation that they will be able to recruit, train, and bring their units to full strength in time to do some good. This will not work.

I can just picture it now. And I want you to think about it also. A nuclear weapon has just detonated in Washington DC. The chief of staff of the Virginia National Guard rushes into the AG's office and says breathlessly: General, Washington DC has just been attacked with a nuclear weapon. What do we do now? The AG then says, "Send out the recruiters to bring the Virginia Defense Force to full strength!" I think not.

It is the nature of catastrophic emergencies to be unforgiving of delayed responses. The attacks will occur without warning or with little warning. There may be warning of some disasters but too little advance notice to spend six to ten weeks bringing the State Defense Force to full strength.

The only pseudo-advantage of cadre units is to provide the illusion of readiness without the reality.

For catastrophic emergencies in particular and for lesser emergencies as well, it is absolutely necessary to be fully prepared in advance. That means that the SDF units must be at full strength, fully equipped, have access to stockpiled supplies, and trained and rehearsed on pre-scripted responses to catastrophic emergencies.

Strength of the SDF

Finally, there ought to be some strength goals to pursue. The present situation of 25 units sharing 20,000 active members is unsatisfactory. That amounts to an average of 800 active members per state. This is far too few members to provide adequate support for a response to a catastrophic emergency.

My own initial strength goal would be to have 300,000 armed active members of the SDF nationwide. This is an average of only about 6,000 per state. Surely that is a feasible goal.

The current small strength of the SDF is due to more to self-inflicted budgetary wounds and worries about administrative burden rather than difficulties of recruiting and retention. Recruiting will succeed if it is tried. Retention will succeed if the troops are given realistic training and important missions.

There are large numbers of trained veterans of the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan that have left active duty, do not want to join the National Guard or a Federal Reserve Component, but would like to help provide for the security of the United States in some way. These prior-service personnel could be integrated into SDF units, undergo some refresher training, and be ready to serve. Many of these people will be NCOs and junior officers, but the tables of organization can be modified to have a grade structure that could accommodate them.

The rationale for the initial goal of 300,000 active members is that this is about half of the strength of the Army and Air National Guards. The future employment of the National Guard on Federal active duty to support the conduct of the war on terror is not known, but the policy has been that each governor will have at least half of his or her National Guard available for Homeland Defense and Civil

Support missions. We don't know the future, but it is prudent to assume that the National Guard will continue to contribute large numbers of units and individuals to the Army and Air Force respectively.

A strength of 300,000 active members will solve a lot of problems. The SDF will become a recognized and reputable contributor to Homeland Security instead of a little known, ineffective fringe group. The stigma attached by some to a force considered by some to consist mostly of self-styled generals and colonels will vanish. As the strength of the SDF increases, the value of this military force in lesser emergencies will be even more apparent. The National Guard may even recognize the value of their SDF units and accept the SDF soldiers as comrades.

In particular, the increased strength at low cost will be welcomed by Governors when they face emergencies beyond their capacity to manage. If Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi had large SDFs, the late arrival of Federal troops for the Katrina Emergency would not have been so damaging to the response. As it was, the use of 5,000 SDF personnel mostly from other states was very useful in the Katrina response operation.

A strong SDF would or should be welcomed by DOD. The increased capability of Governors to deal with attacks and disasters would allow the states to deal with more emergencies without needing federal help. When, as will be the case for catastrophic emergencies, Federal resources and troops will be needed immediately, the presence of strong SDF units in the incident area will fill the needs until the Federal troops arrive.

Another factor is that the ability and perhaps the intention of DOD to have the President federalize all of the National Guard elements in an affected state will strip the governors of any resources needed to support his or her own operations. In that event, the SDF will be the only military forces available to the Governors. If that occurs, a governor is certain to wish that he or she had done the right thing for the SDF before the emergency occurred. It is up to us to relieve governors from that prospect.

WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD FOR THE SDF?

The SDF program is at a critical juncture. The State Guard Association has to take some action. You have to decide whether you are in business to advocate and lobby for a strong, armed militia or to continue to maintain an unsatisfactory status quo. Taking action for a strong SDF will not be an easy task. You have few allies. You need to develop champions for a strong SDF. There are individuals out there, some with great stature, that realize the importance of a strong SDF and will work with you to make that happen. You need to provide leadership and a focal point for all of individuals. In particular, you have the ability to influence the governors and the adjutants general who can make their SDFs valuable assets if they want to.

The title of this talk is The Role of the State Defense Forces in Homeland Security. In my view, that role is to provide large numbers of organized, disciplined, trained, and armed troops to augment the police, National Guard troops, and federal troops in anticipation of and in response to catastrophic emergencies. It is up to you members of the State Guard Association to assure that the State Defense Forces are adequate to perform this role.