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National Defense University Conference on Counterproliferation

Remarks as delivered by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, DC, Tuesday, May 13, 2003.

Vice Admiral Paul Gaffney, President, NDU: Ladies and gentlemen, if there is one person that the National Defense University could call and feels comfortable in calling on for almost any important dialogue it would our luncheon speaker today. He has been kicking off or closing out our Secretary of Defense Strategic Policy Forum War Games, launching our Defense Environmental Forum, speaking to our students and personally guiding us in our regional center outreach programs. He joins us again today as the senior most administration leader to guide this symposium.

I'd like to remind audiences that he started out studying mathematics and chemistry before terminating his education in political science. That chemistry and mathematics is a comforting fact in that such a strong political and strategic leader is also rooted well in analytical skill. He has had influential jobs in many agencies from the Bureau of the Budget, as some of you may remember that term, to (inaudible) to twice at the State Department, three times at the Defense Department, serving under every President from President Nixon to George W. Bush with one exception; you might guess what that is. He has been the Assistant Secretary in the State Department, the Under Secretary in the Defense Department, our Ambassador in Jakarta. He has been a professor at Yale, the long-time Dean of the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at



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Johns Hopkins and he has even been the George Kennan Professor of National Security Studies at the National War College here at NDU.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor to welcome what the lead columnist in the *Washington Post* this morning called "the Pentagon's leading planner and its intellectual architect," the 28th Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Honorable Paul Wolfowitz. (Applause)

Wolfowitz: Thank you, Paul, when I was coming, that was awfully military to all be standing. They all assured me that they were standing for the Admiral not for me. (Laughter)

And the last time Paul introduced me he actually went through my resume at somewhat greater length and I felt I had to apologize for not being able to hold a job. This time I detected my late father, who was a fairly distinguished mathematician, would have detected more clearly that great respect for hard sciences opposed to the softer stuff that I got my Ph.D. in. But I really want to thank you for that introduction.

I was told that I had 50 minutes and then I said that's just about the right length of talk that I learned to do when I was an academic. They said, "No, no, no. We'd like you to at least leave half the time for questions." And I said, that's an opportunity to get into trouble. But then I remembered an old story about a man who was a petroleum engineering expert, and he would go around the country giving talks to various professional groups at \$50,000 a pop and he had this driver who took him all these places. And the driver finally one day said, "You know, what you do is white collar crime." He said, "I hear you. You give the same speech every time you get paid \$50,000. I could do it." So the petroleum engineer said, "Very well. Next stop you can do it. Give me your chauffeur's uniform, and you can put on my suit." So the next stop, they do that, and the driver gets up in front of this big crowd and he goes through the standard stump speech as he's heard the petroleum engineer do it time and time again. And he gets all the applause lines right and all the jokes right and at the end he's greeted with more enthusiastic applause, I guess because he had a fresher approach to it. The first question out of the box is: "If you have super-heated oil at 2,000 feet below the surface and you got cracking, how do you deal with it?" The guy thought for a minute. "You know, that's one of the stupidest questions I've ever heard. I bet my chauffeur could answer that." (Laughter)

Not to reduce him to the status of a chauffeur, but I've brought Jim Thomas with me to answer all the hard questions. And I've appropriately cut my talk so there should be some time for questions, and I look forward to them actually in all

seriousness.

Also in all seriousness, I'm very grateful not only for the hospitality that Admiral Gaffney has shown all these years but for his leadership of this important institution. He's going to be leading another important institution in the civilian world, as I think you all know, as the new president of Monmouth College, and we wish him well, and we congratulate Monmouth on a great catch.

And while I'm in a thanking mode, I'd also like to thank NDU's Center for Counterproliferation Research, which has truly been in the forefront of policy and strategy on this crucial issue. In particular, Dr. John Reichart and his very able staff for the work that they did in organizing this your 3rd annual conference on this subject.

In fact, last fall at my request the center also undertook an important study concerning the post-Saddam elimination of Weapons of Mass Destruction in Iraq. They worked closely with CentCom planners and with senior Washington officials. And that work has helped to set the stage for our current work in Iraq and for our anticipated additional work there. And I want to again thank John Reichart and Rebecca Hersman from his staff who played such a crucial role in getting it done. Thank you.

That study was just one example of what we've been doing recently in the area of counterproliferation strategy. In fact, many of the individuals who have been instrumental in that effort are here in this room today. You too deserve our thanks. The general public may never know about much of this work, but you've helped to blaze new trails in uncharted, difficult, hazardous, and increasingly important terrain.

As President Bush said at the United Nations last fall, "Our greatest fear is that terrorists will find a shortcut to their mad ambitions when an outlaw regime supplies them with the technologies to kill on a massive scale." Clearly an effective counterproliferation strategy is a necessary part of any effort to deal with that threat that the President identified.

As we know all too well, the attacks of September 11th awakened us to what is actually, and probably has been for some time, an era of mass terror. Certainly they changed the way we have to think about national security.

They demonstrated in the clearest terms that we cannot simply wait for a crisis to develop or for enemies to accumulate the means to harm us before we act.

And yet as great as the impact of September 11th was, it would pale in comparison to a major bio or even chemical attack. And we know that it is no longer a question of whether such an attack might conceivably be attempted, but more likely a matter of when. Enemies -- both outlaw states and terrorist groups -- are aggressively pursuing chemical, biological, even radiological and nuclear weapons. And they may have few of the traditional inhibitions that previously deterred people from using those horrible weapons.

As Secretary Rumsfeld has said, "United States must be prepared for uncertainty and surprise. Because the first indication of a threat may come only when an attack occurs."

In an era in which chemical and biological weapons have already proliferated, our priority has got to be on preventing attacks and protecting our people and our military forces. Our strategy accurately reflects these new realities and focuses in particular on the dangerous connection between outlaw states, terrorists, and Weapons of Mass Destruction -- whereas I think they might more appropriately be called "Weapons of Mass Terror."

The new strategy in many ways has codified approaches and activities that have been developed over a number of years in the Department of Defense. In essence, we are working to make counterproliferation a lot more like counter-terrorism and to change both. Our approach calls for earlier and more aggressive efforts to prevent and neutralize threats before they materialize, recognizing that it will no longer do to simply wait until after the fact to retaliate.

Iraq is an example. But our efforts can't stop there. They have to include more aggressive efforts to interdict WMD materials earlier, through targeted operations and expanded cooperation with like-minded nations.

They include efforts to improve our chemical and biological and missile defenses. U.S. forces that deployed for Iraq operations enjoyed the high level of protection offered by anthrax and smallpox vaccinations. They also brought important capabilities that were not available to our forces during the earlier Persian Gulf conflict, including new and improved bio-detectors, a new chemical detector that will trigger fewer false alarms than the ones that we used 12 years ago in Desert Storm, lighter and more durable protective suits and mask, and the latest generation of short range mission defense systems in the form of the PAC-3 which represented -- and I know this from personal experience -- an enormous improvement over the PAC-2s that we deployed in Desert Storm.

For the first time, the Department is developing concepts of operation specific to

biological defense. Biological defense used to be treated as a kind of off-shoot of chemical defense doctrine. That presents a problem, because biological weapons are very different from chemical weapons and require a tailored approach. For example, no chemical agent is contagious, but many -- in fact, most -- biological agents are. So biological defense concepts must address how to prevent the spread of disease.

We've also taken steps to protect critical defense installations and facilities from chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear threats. Following the anthrax attacks of 2001, we instituted measures to provide bio-detection capabilities for the Pentagon. Those include novel approaches such as the use of commercial air samplers known as Dry Filter Units. These Pentagon efforts are helping us to develop Department-wide installation protection standards and requirements, which we hope to apply at 200 other installation over the next few years.

In an action that complements the establishment of the new Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense has also established an office of Homeland Defense headed by an Assistant Secretary. And I think that many of you may know our new Assistant Secretary for Homeland Defense Paul McHale, who comes to us with an impressive background in the military including as a Marine Reservist in Desert Storm, several terms as a Congressman on the Hill, and experience in law enforcement.

And we have stepped up our cooperation with other agencies. We are working with the Department of Health and Human Services to enhance the medical readiness of U.S. forces. This includes successful collaboration in reinstituting a smallpox vaccination program for key military and civilian personnel. We are also working with the Food and Drug Administration, which played a very constructive role in speeding up the re-licensing of the nation's only anthrax vaccine production facility. That action enabled us to vaccinate hundreds of thousands of U.S. troops and to provide anthrax vaccines in large quantities to a number of effective allies and coalition partners.

Thanks to these and other innovations, the war in Iraq was impressively quick and successful. We don't know yet, perhaps we will never know why Weapons of Mass Destruction were not used. It was of all the many things that were conjured up that could go wrong in this war -- quite a few of which struck me as grossly exaggerated -- it was the one that I didn't think could be exaggerated. And we managed to get through it without attacks either in Iraq or on Iraq's neighbors, including Israel, or in this country -- all of which were real possibilities. I do think if we ever do get to the bottom of the answer that some part of the credit has got to go to a brilliant military plan developed by General Tommy Franks and his staff, which presented the enemy with surprise and speed all the more

astonishing, at least the surprise part of it, since it would be hard in my memory to think of an attack that had more strategic warning built into it and yet managed to achieve a substantial degree of tactical surprise.

In any case, as the President said 12 days ago, "This much is certain: no terrorist network will gain Weapons of Mass Destruction from the Iraqi regime, because that regime is no more."

What's more, that country no longer offers a sanctuary for terrorists. Since the end of large-scale hostilities, we have captured a number of terrorist operatives who were hiding out in Iraq. And those who might have sought refuge there must now be seeking a safe harbor somewhere else.

Worldwide, we've made some extraordinary progress in the last few months in capturing key terrorists, perhaps as much progress in the last few months as any other 3-month period or 4-month period since September 11th. Those include most prominently and importantly Khalid Sheikh Muhammed, but also more recently Taufiq bin Attash and Ummar al-Baluchi, and others.

It's difficult to put a precise value on these achievements. But we do know that our work is far from done. Yesterday's attacks in Saudi Arabia are a harsh reminder, if we needed one, that the war with terrorists is not over.

The coalition is presently engaged in Iraq in a comprehensive effort to identify, assess and eliminate that country's Weapons of Mass Destruction and delivery systems, so that weapons and related materials, documents, equipment and -- what at the end of the day may be most important -- personnel do not end up in terrorist hands. Approximately 600 experts from across our government are currently engaged in that effort. Toward the end of this month the number of people involved in the discovery and exploitation of WMD sites and other targets will more than double in size when we deploy the Iraq Survey Group to be headed by Major General Keith Dayton.

Given the size of Iraq -- an area roughly equal to France or to the State of California -- and the extent to which that regime went to conceal its programs -- this effort will take time. Saddam Hussein was a master of deception. Since the end of the Gulf War 12 years ago, he has been redesigning his WMD programs to make them easier to hide. He had four-and-a-half years without any international inspections to conceal his weapons and all evidence of his programs. And he had six months of "strategic warning" -- that is to say, after the passage of UN Security Council Resolution 1441 -- to accelerate his deception and destruction efforts.

That is why we put such emphasis in Resolution 1441 on giving UNMOVIC and the IAEA the authority to interview Iraqi scientists with their families outside of Iraq where they could talk to us freely and without fear of intimidation. The fact that Iraq never allow anyone to be interviewed under those conditions, or even to be interviewed without recording devices or other monitors around certainly suggests that this was a regime with a lot to hide and we are only beginning to get to those people who might be knowledgeable.

Saddam's henchmen were also pros when it came to hiding materials or cleaning sites where chemical and biological weapons might be detected. As reported last week, coalition forces have come into possession of a type of Iraqi trailer that is very similar to an element of a mobile biological weapons production capability described to us by an Iraqi defector and reported by Secretary of State Powell in his presentation to the United Nations last February. That Iraqi trailer appears to have been recently and thoroughly cleaned with a very caustic substance. And it also appears to have been recently repainted.

Over the coming months coalition forces and experts will assemble and analyze the documents and materials that they discover. And they will conduct -- this is important -- extensive interviews with Iraqis who may have knowledge of aspects of the program. In the process, we'll acquire additional pieces of the puzzle to go with those that we already have. Those teams will eventually assemble the various puzzle pieces into a picture that will show us the full extent of the Iraqi WMD programs.

Meanwhile, although it is still early, and we are only beginning to study the lessons learned in major combat operations in Iraq, let me share a few preliminary observations:

First, it seems to me clear that we must continue to evolve toward a capabilities-based approach in planning for chemical and biological defense. We are already doing that elsewhere in the Department. Doing that can help us prepare better for the unknown or the poorly known threats that we are likely to encounter. I guess I should say, that is, for those of you who aren't used to our recent twist in terminology, an approach that's based on capabilities rather than trying to be very specific in identifying the threat and designing your capability to a very specific threat. In general, we think that does not apply well to the world of the early 21st century. And in particular, I think it does not apply well to the area of biological defense. The earlier approach to prioritizing threat agents and targeting budgetary resources based on validated intelligence might have been adequate to meet the anthrax threat for which we had a relatively large body of -- what I guess you could loosely call -- "evidence" available. But that approach left us less prepared

for other agents for which we have less intelligence.

One problem with threat-based approaches is that our intelligence about chemical and biological threats is inherently limited and uncertain -- given the ease with which these capabilities can be concealed, especially when compared with nuclear or major conventional weaponry. Advances in biotechnology and in other areas of science also leave us vulnerable to the possibility that we will always be several steps behind a sophisticated adversary, who may vary his choice of threat agents faster than we can develop threat-specific responses.

Consequently we think it's important that DoD invest in research and development of a number of different promising technologies simultaneously -- to counter both known and unknown chemical and biological threats and to get on the front side of the threat curve.

Greater emphasis also needs to be accorded to developing generic medical countermeasures -- those that would be effective against the broad range of pathogens -- so that an adversary's use of a novel agent does not suddenly render our targeted countermeasures ineffective.

A second emerging lesson is that we need to rebalance and reallocate our force structure -- to ensure that we have enough of the right people and equipment. And I think people are the long pole in this particular tent, although equipment is important. The right people and equipment that we need to confront the biological and chemical threat at home and abroad and that they can be quickly deployed when needed. Our first priority is to ensure the security of our homeland. At the same time -- and it really is part of that same mission -- we've got to be able to defend our interests overseas. The President should never be put in a situation where he has to choose between doing one or the other. We need to have enough capability to do both at the same time.

And yet today some of our chemical and biological defense capabilities -- including those needed for biological detection, consequence management and WMD elimination -- are stretched thin between meeting homeland defense and national security missions. For example, if a biological crisis had emerged here at home, while we were engaged in combat operations in Iraq, there would have undoubtedly have been very strong pressure to redeploy key military bio-defense assets back from Iraq to the United States.

As short as this campaign was, I think it made abundantly clear what few fully understood before -- that chemical and biological defenses are classic examples of what we came to call low-density/high-demand assets. Or as Secretary

Rumsfeld said, "That's just another euphemism for something we didn't buy enough of." They are highly specialized capabilities that are called upon to meet many mission needs worldwide at the same time. As we look to the future, it is clear that the chem-bio defense mission is not going to go away. We must ensure sufficient forces to undertake the mission at home and abroad.

Another aspect of our current force structure concerns how we allocate our chemical and biological defense units between active duty and Reserve forces. About 70% of these units are currently in the Reserves. And while our Reserve forces are of very high quality -- and they have been demonstrating that really over the last year-and-a-half -- they can take longer to mobilize. Given the unpredictability of the WMD threat, we need to have sufficient defense capabilities to meet short-term emergencies. To ensure that we have the chem-bio defense forces early in crises when they may be needed most, we need to consider whether some forces in capability should be shifted from the Reserve to the active component.

Third, since WMD in the hands of rogue states and terrorists is the greatest security threat we face in this decade, we will continue to have a requirement for a robust WMD elimination capability even after the discovery and the destruction of Iraq's WMD capabilities.

The elimination capability that we put together in the months before Operation Iraqi Freedom will need to be retained, enhanced, and institutionalized. Accomplishing this will be an integral part of the effort to re-balance and re-allocate our force structure that I referenced earlier. In future conflicts we should not end up playing "pickup games" when we are trying to put together forces for eliminating Weapons of Mass Destruction in the aftermath of a conflict. We must ensure that there are sufficient forces in peacetime, adequately trained, organized and equipped for that mission.

As with all other aspects of our WMD defense capabilities, the enduring elimination challenge will not be just a matter of ensuring a sufficient number of people outfitted with the appropriate equipment, but also ensuring that those well-equipped personnel have the proper concepts, doctrine, and training to use those capabilities effectively to accomplish their mission.

And finally, an emerging lesson from Iraq is that we need our coalition partners to do more to prepare themselves for WMD threats. And indeed I would say we can expect, I think, that this is an area where our coalition partners can contribute substantially. When key allies and coalition partners are unprepared for WMD threats our own ability to project power in defense of critical U.S. interests is

endangered. Because they fear becoming a potential target, unprepared allies may be reluctant to support coalition operations. Despite a decade of proselytizing by the United States about these risks, our coalition partners, with a few significant exceptions like the U.K., remained poorly prepared for WMD use. Even some of Iraq's neighbors, who you might have thought would have been better prepared, were coming to us to draw on our relatively limited supplies of key items. Some coalition partners in Iraqi Freedom even lacked basic defensive equipment such as protective suits, masks, and atropine. They looked to us to make up their shortfalls. We were not always in a position to do so, but we did what we could. For example, we set aside anthrax and smallpox vaccine for tens of thousands of defense personnel for nearly 20 countries.

For the future, we need to consult with allies and coalition partners to achieve a common vision about threats and the level of chem-bio defense preparedness that will be required for future combat operations. Rhetoric must be matched with resources, and defense commitments must be honored. Our aim should be to lessen the dependency of potential partners on the United States for chem-bio protection. More than that, we should encourage our coalition to think of this as an area where they can contribute to the collective defense and indeed where they can help to meet what may unfortunately be an increased worldwide demand for these kinds of capabilities. But it is interesting, since this is an area that is people-intensive rather than equipment-intensive. I think it is an area where quite a few of our allies -- including some of the newer NATO members and NATO (inaudible) members -- have capabilities that could be quite substantial and quite important and can be thought of, not just as a complement to American forces, but the kinds of things that might be drawn on if there were a bio-terrorism catastrophe in whatever country.

Indeed there's at least one thing I think that's almost misleading about that term "homeland defense," and that's the word "homeland." In one respect, it's very important. It emphasizes that we, our own territory, our own cities and populations are at risk in ways that we really never had to think about, at least since the war of 1812, I guess, unless you count the Civil War. But at any rate, it's a new world for us in that respect. And the word "homeland" is useful in that respect. But if you stop and think about it, it would be a huge problem for us if, let's say, there were a catastrophic terrorist event in Japan. We just had one in Saudi Arabia. Imagine what it would be like if it were on the catastrophic scale. It was bad enough as it was. Being able to respond to this kind of problem worldwide is unfortunately something, I think, that the world as a whole has got to face up to. And these kinds of capabilities should come from more than just the United States.

To conclude, learning these lessons from Operation Iraqi Freedom can help us to

ensure that in future conflict we are even better prepared to counter the threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

There's no question that history will judge harshly those who saw the coming danger but failed to act. One recalls the time when President Roosevelt asked Winston Churchill how the Second World War should be remembered. Churchill answered that it should be called, "the Unnecessary War." "Because," he went on, "there was never a war that was more easy to stop." For years the world allowed the Nazi's to build a war machine in direct violation of international agreements. For years nothing was done until it was too late to prevent a catastrophe.

That is why we must take these issues so seriously in a post-September 11th world. It is for this reason that we have to be willing to press controversial policies, even those that may challenge traditional norms and customs -- because so much is at stake.

We are at a turning point in history where Weapons of Mass Destruction in the hands of outlaw states and terrorists now represent a new and very different kind of threat. That underscores the significance of this conference and why your work is so vital.

I encourage you to persevere in your efforts. And again, I would like to thank National Defense University and all of you who have given your valuable time to participate in this conference. (Applause)



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