

Association For Intelligence Officers

The Tom Smith New Mexico Chapter

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OCTOBER MEETING

Wednesday, 13 October 2010

Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort, Santa Ana Reservation (Bernalillo--Map Attached)

11:00 AM: Buffet Lunch Served

11:30 AM: Call To Order

Recap of September Meeting

Many thanks to Bob Hull for his presentation on **"Designing Buildings to Protect Against Terrorist Attack."** Although I was unable to be there, the feedback was uniformly positive. Thanks, Bob, for a very interesting talk!

President's Corner:

I'm both intrigued and disturbed by the global Intelligence landscape, and by the diverse factors affecting our international relations and operations. As all you professionals in this organization are aware, America's strength, vigilance, and willingness to go to extraordinary lengths to support the cause of freedom have provided hope (and help) to people around the globe who have suffered from calamities, both natural and man-made. Also, it's remarkable to note how quickly a country's fortunes can change. In the upcoming meeting, we will explore some of the current disturbances in "the force," (apologies to Star Wars fans), and see how they impact our Intelligence enterprise.

There's no shortage of threats, but I'll start with the closest one – Mexico. Some believe the violence is limited to the US-Mexico border cities, and that's generally what makes the news. In fact, the cartel warfare is far more widespread. I won't burden you by attaching the numerous available reports, but to give you some idea of the geographic spread of the problem I'm attaching a summary of recent incidents. Also, you should be aware that the following Mexican states have experienced cartel violence: Jalisco, Nuevo Leon, Chihuahua, Durango, Michoacan, Mexico, Hidalgo, Veracruz, Guerrero, Sinaloa, Quintana Roo, Morelos, Tamaulipas, San Luis Potosi, and Puebla. Finally, so you can see how some Mexican nationals put this in perspective I'm attaching a New York Times Op-Ed piece, entitled: "Mexico—A War Every Century."

In the Pacific, the Chinese government and the PLAN (People's Liberation Army Navy) are exhibiting somewhat evolved behavior—by which I mean they are employing more complex approaches in efforts to restrict our (U.S.) access to the region. Intimidation and money are common tools, which they couple with hyperbole and aggressive rhetoric. These tactics have been evident, recently, with respect to the Spratly Islands in the South China Sea, and the Senkakus in the East China Sea. While China claims all of both seas—without regard to international law, customary maritime boundaries, or historic claims of other nations—various other countries also claim some of those islands, and occupy several of them. Territorial sensitivities aside, the Spratlys are a contentious issue because the seabed underlying them is presumed (though not yet conclusively proven) to hold valuable oil, gas and mineral deposits. To give you some idea of the current debates, I'm

attaching 3 short but pertinent papers: (1) China's 'Finlandization' Strategy in the Pacific; (2) U.S., Asean to Push Back Against China; (3) Indian & Pacific Oceans--US on the Defensive. As an aside, I should also note that the Chinese are among the top cyber-security threats to this country.

Iran and its leadership constitute an enigmatic but troublesome (and potentially dangerous) problem for the U.S. and our allies, and for the Middle East. Ahmadinejad is apparently willing to say anything to garner attention, most recently using the UN pulpit to accuse the U.S. of perpetrating the 9/11 attacks, and reiterating his wish to obliterate the "Zionist Regime" (and the state) of Israel. Iran's nuclear ambitions are highly suspect, but Iran's desire to be recognized as a "world power" has been made explicit.

Iraq continues to slog through its Sunni-Shiite swamp, unable to form a government, and having great difficulty containing the violence resulting from its lack of a viable governmental structure. Our remaining troops, who are intended to be in strictly advisory and training roles, are still contributing their professional fighting skills—and giving their lives—to help this country come together.

In Afghanistan and Pakistan, now the inseparable "AFPAK" problem, the situation is fluid and discouraging. Karzai's Afghan government lacks credibility and is demonstrably corrupt, posing significant challenges to our State and Defense Departments, and to prosecution of the war in the countryside. Pakistan has just suffered the worst floods in decades, seeing its major crop producing areas and their infrastructure devastated. The dimensions of the overall setback to Pakistan's economy, government and military are yet to be fully appreciated. Adding to these calamities are the facts of an ineffective government, its inability to control the ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence) Directorate, and its inability to come to grips with tribal differences along its border with Afghanistan or to engage in effective dialogue with al-Qaeda-associated groups and Taliban. I note that reference to a possible coup by the military surfaced recently (and disappeared just as quickly), and that the Supreme Court is considering revoking the immunity granted by former President Musharraf to now-President Zardari concerning charges of corruption going back several years. Overall, the puzzle we know as AFPAK is missing some pieces while others are damaged, increasing the challenges to our attempts at nation building and prosecution of the Taliban.

Bring your own issues and interests with you to the meeting. There's lots of fodder for spirited discussion in this group. See you at the meeting.

Regarding the meeting, please remember: (A) we are now meeting at the Tamaya Resort, an upscale location; and (B) the luncheons are catered buffets, at a special cost to us of \$20.00 per person, including tax and gratuity. Since their staff must plan in advance for the right number of attendees, we will need an advance commitment from those planning to attend. We request that as soon as you decide (but NLT 7 Oct), please place your reservation with:

Vice President Jerry Monahan -- 242-9857

As usual, bring a check or cash for our Treasurer, Judith Mead, who will write a single check to the Tamaya Resort for our lunch. If you sign up but don't show up, we must still charge you for the meal unless you've let us know in advance (24 hrs) that you can't make it.

Other Personnel News:

Ruby Ellen Smith was affected rather more than she (or we) had hoped by her surgery last year, and is finding it more difficult to get around. We may not have the pleasure of her company at our monthly meetings. She is well but not very mobile, and her daughter is looking after her. We all send our best wishes to Ruby.

Edna Fowler may not be able to drive at the moment, but she remains interested and engaged, as always, and we'll look forward to her continuing contributions whenever she can make our meetings.

Ron Cuellar and I speak fairly regularly, and he remains well informed and offers incisive assessments of national security affairs—from Texas. His health is stable, and his sense of humor is undiminished.

Brendan O'Donovan is doing very well, and appears to be cancer-free. That's terrific news, and we all wish him a return to full activity, and hope he continues his painting.

Respectfully yours,
Pete Bostwick