

Association For Intelligence Officers

The Tom Smith New Mexico Chapter

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OCTOBER MEETING

Wednesday, 12 October 2011

Marcello's Chophouse, Albuquerque Uptown

11:15 AM: Arrive, Sign in, Order Lunch **11:45 AM:** Call To Order

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – OCTOBER POTPOURRI:

The world seems to be going to hell in a hand basket, economically, politically, socially and militarily. If there was a volatility index for global issues like the stock market's VIX, it would no doubt be headed off the charts.

Consider the following:

Disruption of the Egypt-Israel understanding, coupled with the Palestinian plea for statehood, an increasingly dangerous Iran and the break in Israeli-Turkish relations, is a recipe for serious unease in the Middle East and heartburn for one of our staunchest allies;

Outcome of the "Arab Spring" uprisings and demonstrations is uncertain, at best. There are no guarantees of good feelings toward the West, in general, or the U.S. in particular, anywhere in the region;

Relations with Pakistan and Afghanistan—both critical to stability of the subcontinent—are rocky at best, partly because of ineffective or corrupt governments there, and partly because the continuing conflicts there are fraying our ability to prosecute remaining al Qaeda elements there;

The end game in Iraq is uncertain because of continuing sectarian strife and their inability to form a coherent government;

In Southeast Asia, Islamic radicals continue their attacks on the civil/military infrastructure in South Thailand and the southern Philippines, and continue to develop adherents in Indonesia;

In Thailand, the new government of Yingluck Shinawatra faces immediate challenges of extreme flooding in the capital, Bangkok, a backsliding economy, and demands for attention from the upcountry folk who voted her in. More importantly, her billionaire brother Thaksin, a former Prime Minister and populist pot-stirrer who was deposed by a military coup in 2006, indicted for various crimes and exiled, has said he intends to return to Thailand. Absent a royal pardon or the overturning of his criminal convictions, his return would severely burden the government (particularly the military) and could stir renewed protests of the kind that paralyzed Bangkok in 2010. *[I will post on our website a good article by 2 US Army experts on some of the implications of Yingluck's election and Thaksin's intentions]*

In Burma, the new government, whose 2010 elections were viewed as highly suspect by many observers, has recently halted a Chinese dam project in the northern Kachin state. This uncharacteristic

intervention in a China-Burma project is being closely watched to see if it portends a new, more transparent approach to international relations, or is a temporary sop to local opposition to the project.

There is more, of course, but perhaps this will suffice to make your synapses fire between now and the meeting. I'm attaching some articles to the newsletter that you may find interesting.

So, what's the answer to the unremitting challenges to our military and law enforcement professionals posed by these threats to our freedom and way of life? You already know the answer:

A VIBRANT, EDUCATED, DEDICATED INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

Go get the al-Awlakis, the bin Ladens or others who threaten us, wherever they are, with whatever means are available, without regret and without remorse. Never forget!

PERSONNEL NOTES:

I would again like to thank Judith Mead for her excellent handling of the Treasurer's position in the last Chapter "administration," and wish her well with her other endeavors.

I'm happy to pass along that Brendan O'Donovan is making a solid recovery from cancer, and resumed his painting hobby. Unfortunately (for us), he will be unable to resume his post as Chapter Secretary, and will probably not be able to attend future meetings. I told him no one wants to stand for the position of Secretary because they probably believe they could not match his superb and comprehensive reviews of our meetings.

Former Vice President Ron Cuellar continues to hold down his corner of Texas, bearing up under a record succession of 100+ degree days this summer and long round trips to the VA. We wish Ron continued good health and wish he were here to share his trenchant (and humorous) insights into current affairs.

See you all next week.

Respectfully yours,

Pete Bostwick

Attached for your review:

Afghanistan: the Alliance Takes an Unexpected Turn

Burma: Myitsone Dam Construction Suspended

South China Sea: 3 articles on the growing disputes with China