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Commentary & Reply

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Commentary & Reply

From *Parameters*, Spring 2002, pp. 112-15.

BUILDING HOMELAND DEFENSE IN THE DARK?

To the Editor:

Lieutenant Colonel Terrence Kelly makes an interesting case in his article "An Organizational Framework for Homeland Defense" (*Parameters*, Autumn 2001). One of his key points, however, will sadly not be realized. He states that "the prospect of an expanded government intruding on its citizens' rights is of such major importance that it must be addressed in full partnership with the Congress and, to the greatest extent possible, in open forums."

Is it already too late? In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on 11 September, Congress stampeded to pass, with little to no debate or discussion, a number of acts relating to homeland defense. With nary a whimper we now have a Cabinet-level Homeland Defense "Czar" and the executive branch has picked up vaguely defined, so practically huge, powers.

If there is one thing the competing bureaucracies listed in Lieutenant Colonel Kelly's article *don't* want, it is public input and open debate on how to best defend our nation. As with virtually every other aspect of our nation's existence that is tagged with "security," this new fiefdom will be heavy on public relations and short on substantive discussion of its key elements.

As someone with a more than passing knowledge of the history of civil- military relations, I am still rather confused as to just exactly what is going on in Washington. A prominent US Senator states that our nation has "moved beyond declarations of war" and that the War Powers Act is now the law (despite what the Constitution says). The White House announces that it, like its predecessors, does not recognize the War Powers Act but will humor the Congress by going along for now. And then there is the disturbing precedent set during the Gulf War of an executive simply declaring "Article III" and doing as he wishes. (Since the precedent was not challenged in court, an administration can now argue that Congress has "demonstrated acquiescence" and accepted it as *de facto* law). And now we have a new Homeland Defense bureaucracy springing up.

I'm not worried about black helicopters but rather about good old-fashioned confusion and infighting in Washington. Without a well-argued-over plan, one that has support from key constituencies ahead of time, Homeland Defense in any guise is likely to be ugly and ineffective. The billions and billions that are being promised have to come from somewhere, and Lord knows the military side of the house is not going to want to give them up. Already state and local officials here in Texas are clamoring for federal dollars for everything from airport security to school crossing guards (well, not quite yet). And no official I've talked to or read about seems to have even a clue what exactly this new Homeland Defense is, let alone how it interfaces with their authority.

It might also be useful to take a look back at the Winter 1992-93 issue of *Parameters* and Charles Dunlap's article, "The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012." That article was not a prediction, of course, but rather an illustration of several points. Key among them was the drive to nationalize and militarize problems, using the argument of "security" as a rationale for federal and military intrusion into new spheres. In that article, for example, the military had basically taken over aviation and other key infrastructure nodes because security and profit go ill together. We've already seen what a quick and easy solution the military was for "The War on Drugs." Is Homeland Defense (i.e. domestic security) going to be any better?

There has been serious discussion of the issues surrounding Homeland Defense in certain limited circles, but in general there has been no public debate over just how (or by whom) the mission should be approached. Instead, what we are getting is a classic bum's rush. One can almost be certain that key decisions made in the weeks after 11 September, with little or no discussion or input, will quickly dry like cement into precedents that we will be forced to

live with for decades.

Steven J. Forsberg
Houston, Texas

The Author Replies:

Mr. Forsberg brings up some interesting and valid points. However, he fails to note that the current organization was stood up in the middle of a national emergency to assist the President in dealing with an immediate crisis involving the safety of the general public and the nation as a whole. That was not the time to wallow in prolonged debate, but rather the time for action. The President did the right thing. But it should also be noted that the current organization for homeland security is almost certainly not the final answer. As organized now, the Homeland Security Office Director has only limited organic authority and in practice relies on the close relationship between the President and Governor Ridge to get things done. This is not a long-term solution. Members of Congress, most notably Senator Lieberman and Representative Thornberry, have proposed legislation that would create a Homeland Security Agency or Department that is answerable to Congress and has a statutory foundation, a budget, and line authority. Hearings on these proposals (and others that might be forthcoming) have not, to my knowledge, yet been scheduled. But the discussion on how to organize has begun. I have high hopes that over the next couple of sessions of Congress we will see the kind of debate that Mr. Forsberg and I desire, and that the final solution will be an organization capable of helping us defend ourselves from threats to our security, and that is answerable to the people's representatives in the Congress.

The issue of the role of government outlined in my paper, and alluded to by Mr. Forsberg, also bears a quick word. It is true that laws were quickly passed in the wake of the 11 September terror attacks that begin to redefine governmental powers and roles. I believe that they, too, will continue to actively evolve over the next couple of sessions of Congress. But we must recognize that the government, alone, is incapable of defending us against many of these "new" threats, whether posed by terrorists, criminals, hackers, or others who would do us harm. The appropriate metaphor is no longer that of traditional military defense or even police protection. Rather, the more appropriate metaphor is the wagon train in the old West. That is, we, collectively, as a people, must participate in our own defense if it is to be effective. We must report suspicious actions to law enforcement; we must ensure that our home computers, particularly if connected to the internet with a broadband connection (e.g. a cable modem or DSL), have a firewall and are secure; and we must reevaluate what it means to be a good citizen. In short, our physical safety and economic prosperity depend on our collective behavior, not just on our governmental institutions.

Of course, these are my personal opinions and observations, and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Bush Administration, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Army.

Lieutenant Colonel Terrence Kelly

THE USAWC'S PAST AND FUTURE

To the Editor:

Congratulations on publishing a superb anniversary edition of *Parameters* (Autumn 2001). Dr. Samuel J. Newland did a wonderful job of writing "A Centennial History of the US Army War College," which provided an insightful historical perspective on the college's 100 years of service to our nation. His work complements nicely the enduring work of Harry Ball, *Of Responsible Command: A History of the U.S. Army War College*.

I especially enjoyed Dr. Newland's characterizations of the college's evolution and its four distinct phases of organizational development. Harry Ball, myself, and Sam see four colleges in existence from 1901 to 2001, the "First," "Second," "Third," and "Fourth" Army War Colleges. Each college evolved to meet both the internal and external factors of change that have guided the school's purpose, mission, vision, goals, curriculum, and programs. The process over time was one of continuity, change, renewal, and growth.

The development of the "Fourth" Army War College is still under way. Its formation started about 1989 with the fall

of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, and the advent of the information age. It is the Army War College of the 21st century, and it's a great school. Any great school has a least nine imperatives that undergird its institutional excellence: highly select, diverse students; highly qualified faculty and staff; highly relevant research and studies; leading-edge curricula and programs; modern facilities and infrastructure; state-of-the-art educational technology; robust resources and support; contributing outreach and service; and a positive, principles-based organizational climate and learning culture.

The "Fourth" Army War College is strong in all of these nine imperatives. That's why it is successful, has a strategic relationship with the Department of Army, and is the Army Chief of Staff's "school." Like Dr. Newland, I believe the defining characteristic of the US Army War College (USAWC) in the 21st century is the fact that it is now a degree-conferring institution and subject to all the benefits that come with institutional self-study, peer review, and external accreditation. I believe, as well, that Collins Hall and its capabilities for experiential learning, such as the Strategic Crisis Exercise (SCE), have also helped propel the college to new heights of excellence and modernity. The SCE is the finest strategic leader simulation in the armed forces of the United States, and there is nothing comparable in the civilian world. Plus, I give great credit to the deans, faculties, and department chairs for recognizing and integrating Collins Hall capabilities--including its technology, communications, facilities, professional staff, and experiential learning methodologies--into the USAWC curriculum in creative and innovative ways that have significantly elevated the learning power of the traditional and excellent Root Hall seminars. Finally, I would add the distance education and learning capabilities of USAWC as another significant characteristic of this wonderful 21st-century war college. These capabilities have extended the reach of the institution far beyond its bricks and mortar. Further, the methods in development for distant education are truly leading-edge and top quality, benchmarks of the best practices of government, academia, and business or industry.

In sum, the Army War College is a magnificent institution that has all the characteristics of a "learning organization." It has practiced the notion of "continuous transformation" as it has evolved from its early 20th-century historical roots, provided 100 years of service to the Army and our nation, and prepared for future challenges in the 21st century. Dr. Sam Newland described it well.

Lieutenant General Richard Chilcoat, USA Ret.
USAWC Commandant, 1994-1997
College Station, Texas

The Author Replies:

I greatly appreciate Lieutenant General Chilcoat's compliments and elaboration on my article. While he was Commandant, General Chilcoat initiated many of the key innovations which have been instrumental in the development of the "Fourth" Army War College. It was General Chilcoat who announced the intent of the institution to seek the approval of the US Department of Education to become a degree-granting institution and then to proceed to the next step, regional accreditation. It was also General Chilcoat who began the initiative to move the old Corresponding Studies Course from a largely mail- and paper-oriented course to one that takes advantage of the latest technologies available to educators, providing students with an on-line, internet-based course.

The impetus provided through his initiatives and leadership while he was Commandant--particularly seeking accreditation as a degree-granting institution--sparked the transition of the Army War College from being just the final rung of the Army's educational ladder to an institution that is both the Army's premier educational setting and a first-class, graduate-level school. Through this transition the Army War College has moved, as he states, from being a "bricks and mortar" institution to one that through its faculty, residence educational programs, and distance education program offers the Army, its reserve components, and its sister services the best education in strategic land power available anywhere in the world. Finally, every indication is that the transition of the US Army War College continues, that it will remain responsive in adapting to meet the needs of the Army and the nation.

Samuel J. Newland

