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Jayson Spiegel, executive director Reserve Officers Association of the United States speaks at the Conference of Defence Associations

Jayson Spiegel: Thank you very much. I'd ask your indulgence this morning. I have a bit of a cold which I caught last week while in Salt Lake City attending the Olympics which was an extraordinary experience. But I have to tell you I'm very glad that the French judge did not score the Afghan war. If she did we might have found that the Taliban had won because of the artistic way in which they threw their hands in the air while surrendering.

So but congratulations on your hockey victory last night. But my children are hockey players and were in mourning when I called them and I have to say it was interesting watching it on the CBC, not on NBC. Definitely got a different perspective on the referring and all those penalties that were called last night.

What I'd like to do is talk to you first about transformation and some of the ways that I think the American military is going to be grappling with, transformation and change. And then talk about the reserves and some of the unique concerns and problems that the current deployment is facing. And I think the first thing you have to do when you talk about transformation is try to come to grips with what transformation is. It has become one of those terms that means everything and therefore nothing. And that everyone is justifying whatever platforms they may have as a transformational vehicle. You know it reminds me of a famous United States Supreme Court case where Justice Potter Stewart was asked to define pornography. And he said I can't define pornography but I know it when I see it. And that's kind of what transformation has become. It means so many things to so many people.

You know you could argue that the horse is a transformational military platform because American special forces used horses in Afghanistan quite effectively even though going into it none of them had ever ridden a horse before. Which I think will have some interesting recruitment aspects for special forces in the future.

But transformation to me means more than just equipment. It's a mind set. It means doctrine. It means training. It means simply using new approaches to operational concepts, old and new technologies and new forms of organization to anticipate new or emerging strategic and operational challenges that render previous methods of conducting war obsolete or subordinate. And that can be a very scary proposition for some because it calls into question the continued viability of some of their platforms, programs, and the way they've done business in the past. And like most bureaucracies part of the Pentagon will certainly react against any sort of change.

But the idea of transformation has been around a long time. And one of the, it's perhaps supreme ironies is that President Bush actually campaigned on transformation. You know in all western countries we decry the fact that our politicians don't campaign on military issues, don't engage the public, don't really try to have an intelligent debate during campaigns about the way of the future for the military. And yet President Bush in a speech at the citadel in South Carolina specifically said if elected I'm going to work to transform the military, eliminate cold war programs, make the army lighter, faster, more deployable. And he wasn't the only one who talked about it.

For a long time literally since he's been in the Senate Senator Joe Lieberman from Connecticut has been talking about the same thing. So to some extent the stars in alignment to make transformation happen. And after President Bush was elected the vehicle that he used or selected for transformation was the quadrennial defence review. Which was a much anticipate effort which Congress directs that the President every four years in his first year of office articulating new national security strategy. And then figure out what force structure equipment, investments, organizations are needed to implement that strategy.

Well my opinion and I'm speaking only for myself now the quadrennial defence review was a monumental failure. I don't know how many of you have read it. It's available on the Pentagon's web site which is fairly easy to remember, defencelink.mil. It's only seventy page long. It says absolutely nothing. If a graduate student handed it in he or she would deserve a C. It's no in-depth analysis and we tend to forget that it was so, the weeks leading up to it's release in September there were actually calls for Rumsfeld's resignation. That he had lost control of the military. That he had conducted all these negotiations in secret. And it all had blown up in his face. And that there was an effort to cut the size of the Army. Perhaps eliminate two of the ten active divisions in order to fund missile defence.

And Rumsfeld was viewed as too old and too out of touch to run the Pentagon. Well talk about rehabilitation. September 11th happened and the whole world changed. And everyone says it and I think that's one of those cliches that is absolutely true. The entire debate, the entire dialogue changed after September 11th. And one of the things that we have seen is that the conflict in Afghanistan is I would submit to you the first war of transformation. It has funded, has been fought fundamentally differently then anything we have seen in the past.

And the reasons are well documented. They've been reported throughout the print and electronic media that this was very much a precision war. Ground troops calling in targets via lasers. The linkages between surveillance and reconnaissance platforms. Use of platforms like Global Hawk, Predator, J Stars were unprecedented. About ten thousand of the eighteen thousand munitions that were used in the Afghan war, that's roughly sixty percent, were precision guided munitions mostly using the joint direct attacks munitions kit.

And I would argue that the use of precision not only had an important military benefit but also an important political benefit. And precision in fact furthered our political objectives and hurt bin Laden's in the following way. And I give bin Laden a lot of credit. And he's a lot smarter then he's sometimes caricatured today. I think he wanted obviously very much to hurt the west. And inflict damage. But he also knew that the west would respond. And I don't

think he anticipated that the response would be just a few missiles lobbed into the desert to no effect. I think he thought the response would be massive and savage and overbearing. And that a massive response of Americans killing Arabs indiscriminately would inflame the Arab street and people would rise up against America and our allies in the Middle East. And that didn't happen.

Why? The response was fierce. But it was focussed. It wasn't indiscriminate. There have not been reports of mass killings of civilians. There have not been too many scenes of hospitals and orphanages and women and children dying. Why? Because the munitions that were used were more precise than in the past so that they could be carefully targeted. I think he had no idea that we had the capability to do that and it backfired on him. The results he wanted, the Arab street did not rise up, one, because what bin Laden did was so heinous that even the most passionate of his supporters could not morally justify it. And secondly because the follow on didn't happen. You didn't have the pictures of innocent civilians killed to the extent that you would have done in the past with non precision munitions.

But I also think to wrap the job up just an aside while I'm talking about bin Laden we do have to capture him. And at the end of the day he can't, this can't be a lesson of defiance. It has to be one of defeat that he himself has to be dealt with personally otherwise wherever he may be he'll just rise up and be a Robin Hood again. But having said that I also believe that the death of bin Laden will not be the end of bin Ladenism. And that he could be dead right now and we'd still be facing this together for quite a long time.

The forces that gave rise to him will cause someone else to take up his challenge. Somewhere out there is a teenager who's brother, father, mother, sister whatever was killed in this process. And his blood's boiling. And that's why we have to be ready to deal with it in the future.

But anyway getting back to the precision and why I think that's important. As a result of the precision of US operations US Forces flew far fewer sorties in Afghanistan than in the Gulf. In Desert Storm there were three thousand sorties per day. In Afghanistan two hundred sorties were flown but roughly the same number of targets were involved. Ten aircraft were needed per single target in Desert Storm. In Afghanistan it was one aircraft for two targets. So clearly precision makes a difference in terms of the amount of the platforms that you have to use and the number of sorties that you have to fly.

And there's two lessons that come out of this. And I think that we need to rethink some of the principles of war. Clearly information dominance. If you have it along with air superiority decreases the fog of war. We knew to a much greater extent where they were, where we were and where we needed to go then at any time in the past. And secondly I think we have to rethink the principle of mass. I don't think you'll ever see concentrated forces of land power attacking a target anymore. A concentrated land force is not a potent force. It's a target rich environment for a force that owns the sky. And I think we have to think more in terms of concentration of fires rather than mass land forces.

But having said all that all these great lessons I submit are not universally applicable to every

situation. When we go into Iraq and I use the word when, not if, and that's not based upon any unique insight other than a belief that eventually Saddam Hussein will have to be dealt with. That's going to be a different kind of conflict. First the INC, the opposition group is not the Northern Alliance. They don't control much of anything and they don't have much capability. Secondly Saddam has a much greater grip on his populace than the Taliban had on Afghanistan.

And third the terrain is fundamentally different. The terrain may actually be more advantageous in some ways. But I think it will be a much harder operation. And one that will involve some element of land forces greater than Afghanistan. But certainly far less than Desert Storm. And this raises a lot of questions for the future strategic relevance of the army. And armoured forces. I just don't think we're going to see quite the same need for them as we have in the past.

One of the other personal concerns that I have coming out of Afghanistan is that the Americans are a very impatient people. And we live in a world where CNN and whatnot provides instant analysis and we may have been almost too successful. Because each time the benchmarks have changed. Low casualties. Quick results. What happens if the next one isn't quite as easy or doesn't go quite as well. And instead of talking casualties in the dozens we're talking in the hundreds or God forbid the thousands. Cause that is possible.

Remember at the beginning of the war when there was a special operations raid and they didn't come back with anything. There were media calls for General Franks to be fired. One mission that actually did what it was suppose to but nobody knew. And the pundits who's only experience with the military was playing cowboys and Indians in their backyard when they were kids were demanding the resignation of a great warrior.

What's going to happen when something goes horribly wrong because anyone who's ever worn a uniform even for five minutes knows bad things happen when you play with dangerous toys. I don't know how the Americans would handle that anymore. And I think the leadership certainly has to do a better job of educating that war is a risky business where results are uncertain. And that patience and tolerance of sacrifice is something that goes hand in hand with success on the battlefield.

So where does that leave us in for the future. And I'm going to try to wrap up so we have time for at least a few questions. You all have heard about the President's budget. The billion dollar a day budget for defence which we're all gratified for. It is indeed a staggering number. But the question is how much of transformation does it really fund. Clearly all the hard decisions have been deferred. We're still going to have massive investments in armour and other equipment that some would argue are perhaps outdated and need to be looked at in a different way. You know clearly bombers were one of the success stories of the conflict in Afghanistan and yet the Air Force's investment in bombers is still relatively low compared to it's investment in fighters. I think that's something you're going to see a lot of discussion about is moving more towards bombers and less towards some fighter platforms.

The other thing clearly we all need to invest in and this applies to Canada, the US and

everyone else is strategic mobility. Getting there from here. Special operations forces needed for their platforms. They need better aviation but clearly C17's, C130J's, those kinds of platforms are absolutely critical. Cause if you can't get there you can't play. And we do a lot of, we tend to forget about the need to invest in those kind of platforms.

Of the V22, the Osprey the helicopter that the Marine Corps wants that takes off like a helicopter and flies like an airplane a lot of controversy. A lot of problems. A lot of accidents with it. But if it, if that technology works and I don't think the problem is with the technology itself. What a great asset that would be for special forces. Getting people in, getting them out, getting, doing combat air rescue. Truly a platform that we need to invest in.

Let me talk a little bit about the United States Coast Guard because they were absolutely the forgotten US Armed Force prior to September 11th and I think more attention has been focussed on the Coast Guard in the last couple of months then in the last couple of decades.

It's a multi mission force. It does everything from pulling drunken kids out of the drink in the summer who go overboard down to protecting our ports. But they're clearly inadequately sized and funded to do the mission. The entire port security capability of the United States is in the Coast Guard Reserve. And prior to September 11th that kind of made sense. Because you figured the only time you'd really need port security is when the Army was shipping out, they were going to ship a brigade or a division through a port and you had M1's sitting there and you wanted to protect both the ship and the port.

Well among our most vulnerable assets now that we've woken up to the threat of terrorism are ports. You've got oil tankers sitting there that you could easily target from the water, blow it up, close the port and close traffic. If you attack the port of Chelsea in Massachusetts which is you know not hard to do you could shut off the supply of heating oil to all of New England. So you've got reservists there now protecting these ports. And the question is can you continue that as a reserve mission. There's only eight thousand in the Coast Guard reserve. And up to twenty seven hundred had already been called up. Now that's not something you can sustain because these folks have civilian jobs and families and you can't call them up, send them home, call them up, send them home. So that's a mission that's going to have to be restructured between the active and the reserve component.

The Coast Guard also in terms of equipment if you view the US Coast Guard as a navy separate from the US Navy it's equipment is the forty eighth oldest of the equipment used by the world's fifty largest Navies. They're still using cutters from World War II. The maintenance costs are astronomical. No C4ISR capability. It's, they're really going to have to put a lot of money into investing in Coast Guard capability.

In terms of the reserves in general other than the Coast Guard as of Wednesday over seventy six thousand national Guardsmen and reservists have been called up for Operating Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. And that's a lot of folks. That's the most since the Gulf. In addition to that you still have people on duty in Northern Watch in Iraq and also in Bosnia and Kosovo. In fact the command in Bosnia is the 29th infantry division from the Virginia National Guard. So a whole lot of folks are on duty. And the Pentagon is looking at that. For

a couple reasons.

One there's a question as to whether you've got all the right stuff in the active side as opposed to the reserve. The initial reaction was we need to grow the active. I would argue you don't need to grow the active. You need to since only a fraction of the active duty force is being used at this point you've obviously got a lot of stuff that isn't being used. And you may need to get rid of some irrelevant structure. Look at some of your armoured divisions. Some of your logistics that doesn't deploy and see if you can do that with another form of manpower rather than active duty personnel.

Secondly the US has got to look very hard at our employer support issues. We monitor at ROA how employers are treating Guardsmen and reservists in light of the call up. And their treatment has been absolutely extraordinary by large corporations. We surveyed the Fortune 500 and not only are they fully complying with the law in terms of letting their people go and then guaranteeing them their job back but many of them are paying the difference between military and civilian pay for those Guardsmen and reservists who are suffering a loss of pay.

Some are actually paying them their full salary and benefits while on duty. And that's a pretty sweet deal. In fact if my employer would do that for me I'd volunteer for mobilization in a heartbeat. And hold two salaries. The question is how long can that be sustained. If the call up continues, if more and more people are mobilized will employers continue to do that. And only large employers are going to do it anyway. Small business can't do it and State and local governments are not going to do it. Some are but it's just a lot harder for them to do it. They just aren't, may not have the profit base to sustain it.

And Uncle Sam which employees five percent of all Guardsmen and reservists adamantly refuses to pay the difference in pay between the military and civilian pay. The rationale is they don't want a two sergeant in a foxhole one pulling down sergeant's pay and the other pulling down their pay as a sergeant and then the difference between their pay as a mail carrier and a sergeant. They think that will lead to jealousy and destroy morale. My argument is knowing sergeants that if one guy is making more money then the other he's not going to be jealous. He's going to try to get him in a poker game and take all that extra money. And probably would successfully do it. But as of now Uncle Sam is not willing to entertain that.

The other thing that has to be looked at for the Guard and reserve is the role in homeland defence. Traditionally that's a national guard mission because the guard is responsive to the Governors. And the federal reserve is not. The difficulty is is the national guard properly structured to do that. They have all the military's reserve combat structure. Tanks, artillery, armoured personnel carriers. They do a good job of it but if there was an attack again on New York State I don't think Governor Pataki wants M1's and artillery. He wants military police, engineers, doctors, those sorts of folks and that's what the guard doesn't have. That's in the federal army reserve. So those are some issues that have to be dealt with.

Candidly it's very hard to do it. Because at the end of the day it's a jobs program. The tanks and artillery and other pieces that the guard has require a lot of maintenance. Therefore you have to hire a lot of guys to maintain them. On Uncle Sam's payroll. So it's a great jobs

program. So are the Governors willing to trade in all these jobs for MP's and civil affairs and doctors who have no equipment and therefore no maintenance jobs. Politics becomes a reality in a lot of these issues.

Lastly before I entertain any of your questions let me talk about what all this transformation may mean for the alliances. And I am concerned that as America goes aggressively forward on transformation that it work with the allies and let the allies keep up. I'm concerned that if the other members of NATO are not willing to make the investments and commitments necessary then we're going to have gross interoperability problems. We can't have anybody left out or left behind as new precision technologies are brought on line.

I don't believe the US wants to go it alone. There are certainly isolationist tendencies and go it alone tendencies that exist in Washington. But at the end of the day there is always a preference for going it in alliances. But to do that you have to be able to work together and have comparable equipment that can function effectively as part of a unified team. And I know there's been great debate here about whether the military is adequately resourced and sized. And I would argue from what little studying I have done that more needs to be done. More investment needs to be made. More commitments need to be made to increasing the size of the military.

At the end of the day what happened on September 11th was not just an attack on New York and Washington or the United States. It was an attack on all of us. And the US just happened to be the first target cause we're the most visible and the most politically apparent to bin Laden and his folks. And I say that not because of article 5 was invoked or because of the collective security framework. But this is a battle between cultures. Between radical Islamic fundamentalism and those of us who share a common western (Inaudible) Christian ethic. And it was an attack on those values that we share in common.

And we all have to deal with it together. And as I said there's going to, we all believe there's going to be more attacks. The death of bin Laden will not be the death of bin Ladenism. And I don't know any more then anybody else on where the next attack is. But if the next one happened a couple hundred yards down the road on the Canadian Parliament building I would hope that Canada would be able to respond with the Allies in a military fashion as aggressively and effectively as was dealt with in Afghanistan. And I know from my own work in the reserves that there is great work being done in the intel and other communities even on the ground in Afghanistan with the battalion working as part of the American brigade.

But we all need to recognize that these new threats require new investments, new technologies, new doctrine, new organizations. And if we don't all work at it together we won't be able to deal with it effectively in the future whenever the next threat comes. With that we've got a couple of minutes. I'd be happy to take any of your questions on anything I said or didn't say.

Moderator: The floor is open.

Question: Sir do you have any evidence, any studies that you're aware of that might indicate that the job protection legislation you have for reservists is in fact a deterrence to recruiting reservists because some employers may so oh, this guy I might lose him at some point so if I've got a choice between him and someone that I'm not legislated to protect I'll take the other guy. Is there any evidence of that?

Jayson Spiegel: In fact the law prohibits discrimination. You cannot refuse to hire someone because of service in the reserves. And in fact we have instances and we've dealt with them at ROA where people have been promised a job to start at a future date and then called up before the start date. And they're required, the civilian employer is required to have that job available when the reservist is demobilized. And that's a critical component because that's yeah I can tell you from my own personal experience when I graduated from law school and was just going off to do some reserve schooling a lot of employers were pretty concerned about you know what happens if there's something big that happens and you've got to go do your two weeks annual training. So that's a critical component to the law is in anti-discrimination provision. And the department of labour actually is the one who would litigate it on behalf of the soldier. He or she does not have to go out and hire an attorney. The US government would sue the employer on their behalf.

Question: Thank you.

Moderator: Any other questions?

Question: Jayson you mentioned about the transformation. The army has for instance transformed a number of brigades to or will light brigades and GM has provided the vehicles to them for a large extent. But I'd like to hear your vision for the future transformation of the army and particularly the heavy formation. The armoured formation. What do you think will happen to these formations?

Jayson Spiegel: I think they've got to continue to get lighter and more deployable. Again if we went into Iraq tomorrow we're not going to be given six months, or whatever it was that we took a decade ago to move heavy formations over there. I think our capabilities from the air have so dramatically improved that you're just not going to have massive armoured forces colliding with each other in the desert or in the (Inaudible) or anywhere in the future. So I think General Shinzeki(sp) was quite right to come up with a medium weight force. But I think we're going to continue to see lighter and lighter forces. You know personally I think we're going to continue to need some heavy armour but dramatically less than what we have now both in the active and particularly in the national guard. I just don't see those forces ever from the guard being used.

So I think, I'm not saying we ought to go completely away from track vehicles. I don't think that's realistic. But the likelihood of needing, of significant armoured combat like we've seen in the past I think is remote. And the same with the Crusader and similar artillery vehicles. You've got to get them there. And we're not going to have the luxury of time in the future to mass and assemble the way we did. I mean if we refought the Gulf today Saddam would be smart enough to use some sort of weapon of mass destruction against the ports. And if you

had to do a logistics over the short deployment it would never work.

Question: Thank you.

Question: Leo Moore, Army Corps Association. How is your recruiting and retention right now with the guard and reserves in the last couple of years and particularly since 9/11.

Jayson Spiegel: There were still problems. You know there was this surge right after September 11th. It has gone back to normal. With the economy slowing down that always helps recruitment. But it doesn't, it helps, but it doesn't solve everything. The National Guard has certain inherent advantages. In many States if you join the National Guard you get free tuition at the State University. And that is a big selling point because you know you go to a couple months basic training, one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer. Unless you get called up and free education. That's, my sons joining the Maryland National Guard. He knows that. You know so that helps them.

Retention becomes a big problem because after four years people get their degree, they tend to say this ain't fun anymore. So it's still a huge challenge. I believe the problem is a cultural one. We've in all societies, all western societies we've become so, the military has become so disconnected from civilian society at large that it is just hard to convince people that serving in the military is a noble profession. It's different. We, it just changed after Vietnam I think where it's not seen I don't think parents are encouraging their children to enter the military. It's seen as a diversion or a delay in getting on with your great successful career on Wall Street. And that's tragic. But I think that's the reality.

Question: Thank you very much.

Question: Good morning. I'm former commander master chief in your parlance sir to give you an idea of where I'm coming from. You talked about the US Coast Guard and sustainment and restructuring of the Coast Guard for port authority. Could you talk about the naval reserve. Would there be inclusion of the naval reserve in support of the Coast Guard?

Jayson Spiegel: There is certainly some of that. The, there are some key differences because the Coast Guard has arrest authority that the federal naval reserve does not. That's why one of the reasons why they're kept separate. There's what's called a posse comitatus act which prohibits the federal military from arresting, apprehending or detaining people, US citizens in the US. So that's why the Coast Guard is not part of the Pentagon. So it's organized differently. And so much of what they do is law enforcement. But in terms of aviation and some other things there are significant cooperation. In fact I've heard the Commandant of the Coast Guard Admiral Lloyd say the first call he got after September 11th was after he spoke to the Secretary of Transportation the Secretary of the Navy called and said all of my stuff is yours. And the Coast Guard did use Department of the Navy vessels in New York in the immediate aftermath of September 11th. So there is a lot of cooperation between the two. But because of the arrest issue to some extent they've got to be kept separate.

Question: So one last question the naval reserve are they active with the task group overseas

now in the Arabian?

Jayson Spiegel: They are. Yeah in fact I think there's a couple port security units. And that's one of the interesting questions. You raise a good point. The US Coast Guard is providing port security in Aden and Bahrain and some other places. And it's a legitimate question as to whether that should be a navy mission overseas and leaving the Coast Guard assets to guard ports here. I think as part of the restructuring that's going to be seriously looked at. Since obviously arrest authority is not relevant in Aden.

Question: Thank you.