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# Speech

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## National Guard and Reserve Component Caucus Breakfast

*Remarks by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. , Wednesday, March 6, 2002.*

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I want to thank you all for being here. It's quite a turnout. Special thanks to Congressman [Steve] Buyer who is, as most of you know, an Army Reservist who served during Desert Storm and I'm told, today, a lieutenant colonel in the Reserves facing a promotion board soon. [Laughter.]

Congressman Buyer: I'm glad you noticed. [Laughter.]

Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz: And my very impressive general who is my senior military assistant asked me to say, "Hooah" to you. My Air Force staff member said that it's Army for "good luck." And I was told no, no, "it's make every shot count." And I'm sure you will. [Laughter.] And to Congressman [Gene] Taylor who's playing this distinguished role as your co-chairman and served many years as a member of the Coast Guard Reserve; I'd like to commend you and your whole Caucus for your service to our country.

And most of all I'd like to say a special thanks to the man who earned the title of Mr. National Guard, Sonny Montgomery. You've done great work, great service to our country, and it's great to see you still here, a living legend. Thank you. [Applause.]

It's been said that, "God helps those who get up early." I don't know whether I got up early enough, but in case I didn't, I hope you'll remember the observation that "only dull people are brilliant at breakfast." [Laughter.] I'm not going to aspire to brilliance. We have more than enough brilliance from our men and women in uniform. They've been doing magnificent work.

But as the recent phase of the campaign in Afghanistan demonstrates so clearly, our work in this war on

terrorism is far from over. Even in Afghanistan we have a lot of work to do, a lot of difficult, dangerous work. And history has long proven, and as we have seen this past weekend, half-defeated and desperate enemies continue to pose considerable dangers and risk to our troops. And, of course, al Qaeda is not just in Afghanistan, it's burrowed into some 60 countries of the world, including right here in the United States of America. And al Qaeda is not the only terrorist threat that we face.

We've seen some of the fiercest fighting so far in the last few days rooting out hard core al Qaeda members holed up in the remote mountains of Eastern Afghanistan. The Americans who have been killed in this action speak volumes about the sacrifices that our young men and women are called upon and are willing to make in defense of freedom—as do all the brave Americans who have been injured or given their lives in the cause of freedom, and as the President said the other day, "to make sure that our country is safe from future attack." It is noble work, and we in the Department deeply appreciate their sacrifices and their risks on our country's behalf.

Our men and women in uniform understand the dangers, but they bravely continue to meet the risks inherent in their ongoing mission in Afghanistan. Their resolve and dedication embody this nation's response whenever we are attacked.

As Secretary Rumsfeld has said, "We will be leaning forward, not back." If people perceive the United States as faint hearted or unwilling to take risks, we open ourselves up to further attacks and we embolden our enemies. Again, as the Secretary has said, "We haven't ruled out anything in this war on terrorism. We are ready and willing to put boots on the ground where and when appropriate," and we are doing so today.

An important part of this war on terrorism has been the battle for hearts and minds. That is why from day one of the operation in Afghanistan we included humanitarian operations as an important part of our activity. Humanitarian operations now represent perhaps the largest humanitarian assistance program in the history of a military operation. We not only have delivered enormous numbers of supplies, through the success of our campaign on the ground, we've established a secure environment in which international relief organizations are now able to work.

Just to give you some figures between October 7th when the campaign began and December 21st of last year when we were able to turn the relief mission over to people on the ground: our forces flew 162 C-17 sorties dropping 2.4 million individual humanitarian daily rations, we call them—if any of you have ever eaten, and I'm sure you all have, an MRE [meal, ready to eat], you may question the term "humanitarian," but—[Laughter]—if you're starving to death, it is real food—3.4 million pounds of wheat; 328,000 blankets.

As members of this Caucus know, the risks, the sacrifices and the successes of all these operations—combat and humanitarian alike—are shared by members of the Guard and Reserve, a force that comprises 50 percent of our total force. And those risks and sacrifices extend to peacetime duty.

Just a year ago now I attended a memorial service in Virginia Beach, with a number of you present, to

honor 18 members of the Virginia Air National Guard and three members of the Florida Army National Guard. The Florida Guardsmen had been flying Air Guard Red Horse engineers back home when their plane went down. They were men who served and were loved by their communities and deeply missed by their communities, and I saw that pain firsthand.

But it's a fact that we couldn't do what we have done in this campaign against terrorism so far and what we will have to continue to do for some time to come without our citizen-soldiers.

Next Monday marks six months since the attack of September 11th and in these past months Americans have come to appreciate more fully just how vital our Guard and Reserve are to our country's security. Within minutes after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the National Guard and Reserve answered our country's call. New York Guard members took to the streets of lower Manhattan helping emergency units and standing guard. Guard members from Maryland, Virginia, and D.C. came to the Pentagon, even before getting an official call to duty. And they were among the first on the scene in Pennsylvania. And of course there were those members of the Guard and Reserve who as civilians serve bravely as police and firefighters and emergency medical teams.

Indeed, by noon the following day, on September 12th, more than 6,000 Guardsmen and Reservists had answered our country's call. We would see these men and women on duty across the country providing medical and technical assistance, securing our coasts and our borders and our airports, patrolling our streets, and flying combat air patrols to protect America's skies. Soon after September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Coast Guard began its largest mobilization since World War II.

And as Secretary Rumsfeld has pointed out, until recently we had more Americans on duty in Utah, almost all Guardsmen and Reservists, than we did in the country of Afghanistan. About 4,000 members of the reserve components supported the Olympic Games, and we were able to host those Games without incident, in very great measure, because of the contributions of those men and women.

In Operation Enduring Freedom, the war overseas on terrorism, we have today over 91,000 service members from the Reserve Component taking part in Operation Enduring Freedom and what we call the operation here to protect the skies over the United States, Operation Noble Eagle, as well as all of our other operations. They are contributing major pieces of significant parts of the operation: 50 percent of the force protection for our bases and installations around the world and here at home is provided by Guardsmen and Reservists; 25 percent of warfighting support; and 25 percent of command and control, communications, intelligence and mobilization support. About 68,000 people, including about 2,000 members of the Coast Guard, have been mobilized under Title 10 authority. About 7200 members of the National Guard are helping keep our airports safe.

Let me give you just a few examples of the contributions that our Guardsmen and Reservists are making.

The 29th Infantry Division of the Virginia Army National Guard became the second National Guard

division to assume command of our mission in Bosnia with 2500 soldiers. And members of Mississippi's 155<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade are serving proudly in Bosnia as well.

The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard continue to provide planes, crews and support specialists to Operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch in Iraq. That's a reminder, by the way, we continue to fly dangerous missions over Iraqi territory even though it doesn't get mentioned much in the newspapers.

The 186<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing from Meridian, Mississippi, has been flying KC-135s out of Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, supporting the effort in Afghanistan, including the humanitarian aid operation.

Army National Guard soldiers protect Patriot missile batteries in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Naval and Coast Guard Reservists help secure ports in the Middle East and, of course, here at home.

The Army Reserve provides the bulk of the logistics support to U.S. and allied forces in Kosovo.

And in January, the 39th Special Infantry Brigade of the Arkansas Army National Guard assumed the Multinational Force Observers' mission in Sinai. The 41st Separate Infantry Brigade of the Oregon Army National Guard will follow them.

It's too early to know what the long term effects of the increased deployments since September 11th will be on the Guard and Reserve. We can't keep these people on active duty for extended periods without severe impacts. It's a challenge for the families. It's a challenge for the employers.

It's a dilemma, by the way, that's been with us since the founding of this country. When the winds of war began to stir in May of 1776, John Adams wrote to a Boston minister, "We must all be soldiers." Just a few weeks later, a student in Adams' law office wanted to enlist and Adams told the young man, "We cannot all be soldiers." [Laughter.]

The willingness of Americans to come forward and serve our country and the willingness of the members of our Guard and Reserve to serve on active duty has been remarkable and heartwarming, and I would add that the employer support so far has been strong. Hundreds of employers have extended continued medical care, continued salaries, and established support mechanisms for the families and have taken extraordinary steps to show corporate support for all reservists.

The Defense Department is dedicated to focusing significant efforts and energy to strengthening that employer support and we are looking very hard at our long term requirements.

Secretary Rumsfeld has been pressing people not to simply say we have to have extra people to do all these extra tasks, but also to identify where there are things that we're doing that we don't need to do any more so that we can reduce that strength, not by adding people, but by reducing some unnecessary

missions.

In fact, I can tell you I listened for about 10 or 15 minutes as he pressed President Mubarak of Egypt yesterday on his determination to get our force commitment in Sinai down, just one of many places where we think we're using people unnecessarily.

Looking to the future one of our major priorities is to transform our forces to meet the threats of the 21st Century. And as we look to the future, there is no question we will continue to depend on Reserve Component forces.

To ensure that we're using those components appropriately, I tasked David Chu, our Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, to undertake a comprehensive review of the active and reserve mix, organization, priority missions, and associated resources. We're hoping for an interim report very soon and a completed review hopefully within the next couple of months. That review will focus on options to enhance Reserve Component roles and major mission areas, on how the Guard and Reserve can support the Department's transformation efforts, on business practice improvements, management changes, and resourcing improvements that can ensure that the Reserve Component continues to be as effective as possible in supporting our national military strategy.

We have to approve joint education and leadership development for the Reserve Component. We have to have leaders in the Reserve Component who are just as savvy about joint operations as their active duty counterparts.

Right now we're working on the implementation plan for a new combatant command to provide for homeland security which may well be called the Northern Command. There are complex issues involved which the Joint Forces Command is addressing and one is the command and control relationship between active and reserve commands.

Wherever our transformation plan takes us, the Guard and Reserve are going to be an integral part of our 21st Century force.

In closing, let me just say a word about the war on terrorism. As the President has said, this is not the usual kind of war. It's not a purely military war. We have to, in his words, "use every resource at our command, every means of diplomacy, every tool of intelligence, every instrument of law enforcement, every financial expert, and every necessary weapon of war to destroy and defeat the global terror networks." And certainly one of the great resources of this country has been the men and women who serve us here in Congress and whose support for America's Armed Forces—not just the Guard and Reserve, but everyone in uniform—has been unwavering and inspiring, and we thank you all for it.

The Department's greatest resource is our people and their unwavering and inspiring service. I'd like to share with you a situation report from one of our brave men who was on the ground very early in the campaign in Northern Afghanistan. It's one of my favorite dispatches from the war, and some of you

have heard me read it before. I beg your patience. But I think it gives those of you who haven't heard it an appreciation of how our total force has adapted to the conditions of 21st Century warfare.

This is from a Special Forces captain who was inserted in mid October with General Dostam in Northern Afghanistan. He dispatched on October 25th, "I am advising a man on how best to employ light infantry and horse cavalry in the attack against tanks, mortars, artillery, personnel carriers and machine guns -- a tactic which I thought became outdated with the invention of the Gatling Gun. The Muj have done that every day we've been on the ground. They've attacked with ten rounds of ammunition per man and snipers having less than 100 rounds.

"I observed one man who walked more than ten miles to get to the fight who proudly showed me his artificial right leg from the knee down. We have witnessed the horse cavalry attacking Taliban strong points, the last several kilometers under mortar, artillery and sniper fire but the Muj are doing very well with what they have. They have killed over 125 Taliban while losing only eight.

"We could not do what we are doing without the close air support. Everywhere I go the civilians and Muj soldiers are always telling me they're glad the USA has come. They all speak of their hopes for a better Afghanistan once the Taliban are gone.

"Have to go now. General Dostam is finishing his phone call with a congressman back in the United States." [Laughter.]

This from the same man two weeks later.

"Departed position from which I spoke to you last night. We left on horse, linked up with the remainder of the element. I had a meeting with General Dostam and we then departed on begged, borrowed and confiscated transportation riding into Mazar-e-Sharif. While it was a rag-tag procession, the morale was triumphant. The locals greeted us loudly and thanked all Americans. Much waving, cheering and clapping."

This from an Army man: "U.S. Navy and Air Force did a great job. I am very proud of my men who performed exceptionally well under very extreme conditions. I have personally witnessed heroism under fire by two U.S. non-commissioned officers -- one Army, one Air Force -- when we came under direct artillery fire last night less than 50 meters from us. When I ordered them to call in close air support they did so immediately without flinching, even though they were under fire.

"As you know, a U.S. element was nearly overrun four days ago but continued to call close air support and ensured the Muj forces did not suffer defeat. These two examples are typical of the performance of your soldiers and airmen. Truly uncommon valor has been a common virtue."

In Afghanistan indeed we saw a remarkable combination of brave men on the ground, literally on horseback, taking literally 19th Century horse cavalry and calling in 50-year-old B-52 bombers, but

creating a true 21st Century capability. That is an example not just of what technology can do but what ingenuity and bravery combined with technology can do.

You may have heard that when some reporter asked Secretary Rumsfeld about why he was reintroducing horse cavalry to modern warfare he said, "It's all part of our transformation plan." [Laughter.] And indeed it is.

Permit me to close with a quote from Winston Churchill, I guess everyone quotes Winston Churchill these days but forgive me, this one really grabbed me. It's one I've read many times since September 11th. It's from his war memoirs and it's the entry on December 8, 1941 after he heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor. And it won't surprise any of you, he didn't waste a lot of sympathy on us. He was rejoicing that we were in the war—in the war, as he put it, "up to the neck."

"So we have won after all," said Churchill four years before the war ended. And he wrote about "silly people [some in Germany but here in England as well] who discounted the force of the United States. Some said the Americans were soft, others that they would never be united. They would fool around at a distance. They would never come to grips. They couldn't stand the bloodletting. Their democracy and system of recurring elections, these people were saying, would paralyze the war effort. They would be just a vague blur on the horizon to friend or foe." I remind you this isn't about us today, it was us 60 years ago.

"Now we would see, these people said, the weakness of this numerous but remote wealthy and talkative people." We haven't changed much, have we? [Laughter.]

"But," Churchill said, "I have studied the American Civil War fought out to the last desperate inch. American blood flowed in my veins. I thought of a remark which Edward Grey [the British Foreign Minister] had made to me more than 30 years before [as the United States entered the First World War]. Grey had said that the United States is like 'a gigantic boiler. Once the fire is lighted under it there is no limit to the power it can generate.'"

Indeed, there is no limit to the power we can generate together. Brave and dedicated members of our Armed Forces, active and Reserve and Guard alike, along with dedicated civil servants, a dedicated Congress, and a supportive country.

Thank you very much. Thank you for all you're doing. [Applause.]

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