



## **“Scarlet Shield”**

### **NDU Holds Tenth Secretary of Defense Strategic Policy Forum**

**~ Exercise Summary ~**

The Institute for National Strategic Studies’ (INSS) National Strategic Gaming Center (NSGC) conducted “Scarlet Shield”, the tenth in a series of Strategic Policy Forum exercises, at the National Defense University (NDU) on February 14, 2005. These crisis-simulation exercises, an initiative of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, are designed to give senior government officials insights into the nuance and complexity of policymaking in the current global security environment and to illuminate policy and organizational options. Ninety-nine Members of Congress have participated in the SPF program with twenty Members having participated in two or more of the ten events.

Dr. Stephen Flanagan, Director of the Institute for National Strategic Studies, welcomed the Members of the Senate and Executive Branch officials. Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz opened exercise “Scarlet Shield,” stating that since September 11<sup>th</sup>, great progress has been made in dealing with asymmetric threats such as that of biological agents; however, biological weapons remain one of the largest threats facing the U.S. homeland today. He further noted that these exercises have brought many Legislative Branch insights to light in the Executive Branch.



**Secretary Wolfowitz Opens Scarlet Shield**

Three Senators participated in the exercise along with representatives from the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Health and Human Services, the U.S. Surgeon General, the FBI, and the Chief Deputy Director of Homeland Security from California. The officials were present to provide the Senators with perspective on current policies, plans, and assessments as well as advice with respect to notional developments in the exercise.

In “Scarlet Shield,” exercise participants examined the strategic implications of a public health crisis resulting from a large-scale bioterror attack and considered the full range of policy options to both prepare for and respond to the attack. As the exercise progressed, an increasingly complex problem set confronted the participants, forcing them to consider how to best prepare for this type of attack. The exercise highlighted the continued improvements by the government to prepare for terrorist attacks using biological weapons.



**Congressional and Executive Branch  
Participants in Scarlet Shield**

After the exercise was completed, participants discussed their initial reactions and “takeaways” from the exercise. The Members spoke about what they had learned from the exercise and shared their insights on how to respond to a

potential bioterror attack. In short, the exercise provided participants a better understanding of critical national and homeland security issues associated with terrorists' use of biological weapons.

Particularly noteworthy during the "hotwash" was the importance of risk communication in preparing for such eventuality. Educating the public on their roles and responsibilities in advance of a crisis and providing them with authoritative guidance once one erupts will be essential to managing fear and panic and to ensure effective support and cooperation. Additionally, this exercise reinforced the knowledge that all levels of government must begin risk management well before any terrorist attack occurs – to wait until an attack is imminent or has occurred before initiating required actions results in a significant degradation in Federal and State services to the American public.

### **Additional Information**

More Strategic Policy Forum exercises are being planned. For further information, please contact Col Chris Goggins, USAF, Director, Strategic Policy Forum, at (202) 685-4827, by email at [gogginsc@ndu.edu](mailto:gogginsc@ndu.edu).

You may also consult our webpage for new information on upcoming events by going to <http://www.ndu.edu/INSS/SPF>