



"Silent Prairie" Summary Report

SPF Holds Second Secretary of Defense Strategic Policy Forum ~ Exercise Summary ~

Overview

The Institute for National Strategic Studies' (INSS) National Strategic Gaming Center (NSGC) held the second Strategic Policy Forum at the National Defense University on February 11, 2003. A reprise of the inaugural Strategic Policy Forum, Silent Prairie brought 15 Members of Congress together with senior Executive Branch officials to discuss, in greater detail, the complexity and nuance of policy-making during a large-scale agricultural bio-terrorism event.

VADM Paul Gaffney, NDU President, welcomed participants to this inaugural exercise. Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Jim Moseley opened the "Silent Prairie" exercise, noting the importance of a continuing evolution to Executive-Legislative Branch dialogue when examining matters of national importance.

Other participating organizations included the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Army National Guard, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Addressing the Challenge of Agricultural Bioterrorism

Exercise "Silent Prairie" examined the consequences and potential mitigating strategies that the government may take following intentional introduction of a pathogen into its livestock population throughout the country. This forum again provided an open forum for information exchange and decision-making in the context of such a major national security crisis. In addition to examining the inherent difficulty in responding to the problem while conducting major overseas operations; Members also assessed the economic effects of this notional incident and how the United States might respond once the perpetrator had been identified.

After the exercise was completed, Members of Congress briefed Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz and Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Jim Moseley on what they learned and offered their policy recommendations.

Additional Information

More Strategic Policy Forums are being planned. For further information, please contact Col Chris Goggins, USAF, Director at 202-685-4827 or via email at gogginsc@ndu.edu.