

**Advance Questions for**  
**Lieutenant General James T. Hill, USA**

**Defense Reforms**

**Almost 15 years have passed since the enactment of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the Special Operations reforms. You have had an opportunity to observe the implementation and impact of these reforms, particularly in your staff assignment as Assistant Deputy Director for Politico-Military Affairs (J-5) on the Joint Staff from 1992 to 1994 and in your command assignments during Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm from 1989 to 1991 and during Operations Uphold Democracy from 1994 to 1995.**

**Question:** Do you support full implementation of the defense reforms?

**Answer:** Yes I do. When considered in the light of the successful operations since their implementation, it is clear that the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act has profoundly and positively benefited the armed services.

**Question:** Based upon your experience, what is your view of the extent to which these defense reforms have been implemented and the impact that they have had?

**Answer:** The Defense Authorization Act of 1986 has accelerated the integration and synchronization of all of our military's capabilities to fight and win the nation's wars. The success that we have enjoyed on the battlefield in places like Kuwait, Kosovo, and Afghanistan are directly attributable to the high degree with which we have complied with both the spirit and letter of the Goldwater-Nichols Act.

**Question:** What do you consider to be the most important aspects of these defense reforms?

**Answer:** I believe the most important aspects of the defense reforms you mentioned are those that relate directly to the duties for which I am privileged to be nominated. The Goldwater-Nichols act clearly defined the authority of the regional combatant commander over the forces and execution of missions in his area of responsibility (AOR). This simplified chain of command significantly improved the planning and execution of assigned missions during times of crisis. While concurrently providing for the efficient use of Department of Defense resources, these reforms have directly translated into a more efficient military with an enhanced ability to defeat the nation's foes.

**Question:** Do you anticipate that legislative proposals to amend Goldwater-Nichols may be appropriate? If so, what areas do you believe it might be appropriate to address in these proposals?

**Answer:** I am not aware of any legislative proposals that seek to amend Goldwater-Nichols. If confirmed, should there be a noteworthy proposal in the future concerning amending this legislation I will take the appropriate opportunity and forum to address it.

## **Duties**

**Question:** What is your understanding of the duties and functions of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM)?

**Answer:** The Commander of U.S. Southern Command is assigned a geographic area of responsibility (AOR) and reports directly to the Secretary of Defense. He is responsible for U.S. military forces assigned to an area that encompasses one sixth of the world's landmass and includes 32 countries and 14 protectorates throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. As a combatant commander, the Commander of U.S. Southern Command exercises authority over subordinate commanders within the region unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense. The duties and functions of a combatant commander include but are not limited to: prescribing the chain of command to the forces within the command; giving authoritative direction to subordinate commands and forces necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command, including authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations, joint training, and logistics; organizing commands and forces and employing them within his command as necessary to carry out missions assigned to the command; and assigning command functions to subordinate commanders.

**Question:** What background and experience do you possess that you believe qualifies you to perform these duties?

**Answer:** I am truly honored by the President's nomination to be the Commander of U.S. Southern Command. I have been fortunate to serve in many Army and joint positions involved in planning and discussions on major issues affecting this area of the world. While serving as I Corps Commanding General, I have trained forces, developed operational plans, and deployed units in support of a combatant commander which have given me significant insights into the challenges associated with joint and combined operations. In this position, I was also a standing Joint Task Force commander for the Commander of U.S. Pacific Command. My duties as Deputy Commander, Multinational Force and U.S. Forces, Haiti during Operation Uphold Democracy gave me a great appreciation for coalition operations, the problems facing that troubled nation, as well as an understanding of the regional militaries that contributed forces. One of my principle responsibilities as Assistant Deputy Director for Politico-Military Affairs, Joint Staff was to focus on events and issues in the Southern Command area of responsibility. Having the privilege to command from the company to the corps level to include units in combat in Vietnam and during Desert Storm has given me invaluable perspectives on training, caring for, and leading the outstanding men and women in our Armed Forces. These assignments have provided a strong foundation that will serve me well if I am confirmed for this position.

**Question:** Do you believe that there are actions you need to take to enhance your ability to perform these duties?

**Answer:** If confirmed, I will work with key U.S. personnel and government agencies and will travel and confer with regional military and civilian leaders to fully understand and be better prepared to address the complex issues in this region.

**Question:** In carrying out your duties, how will you work with the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, The Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Forces and Low Intensity Conflict, the Commander in Chief, U.S. Northern Command when that combatant command is established, the Commander in Chief U.S. Special Operations Command, the other combatant commanders, and SOUTHCOM's component commanders?

**Answer:** As a combatant commander, I would report directly to the Secretary of Defense who is responsible to the President for creating, supporting, and employing military capabilities. While the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is not in the chain of command, communications from the President or the Secretary of Defense are transmitted to combatant commanders through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Combatant commanders have the obligation to promptly inform the Secretary of Defense on accountable matters and as a matter of course, should keep the Chairman and his staff advised of critical issues that affect the command. In the case of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations Forces and Low Intensity Conflict, the Commander, U.S. Southern Command coordinates and exchanges information in matters that affect SOUTHCOM; however, there is no command relationship. SOUTHCOM's relationship with other combatant commands will depend on "supported" or "supporting" roles outlined in operational plans and execution orders from the President and the Secretary of Defense. On October 1, 2002, NORTHCOM's area of responsibility (AOR) will consist of the geographic area encompassed by the North American continent from the southern border of Mexico northward and outward from the coastlines 500 nautical miles. Cuba, the Bahamas, and the Turks and Caicos will be in NORTHCOM's geographic area of responsibility; however, SOUTHCOM will retain responsibility for normal and contingency planning, theater security cooperation, and force protection for these countries. SOUTHCOM will relinquish to NORTHCOM all current responsibilities in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. SOUTHCOM's relationship with the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, or any other combatant commander will depend on existing operational plans, contingency operations, or ongoing crises. Finally, unless otherwise directed by the President or the Secretary of Defense, SOUTHCOM's component commands are under the authority, direction, and control of Commander, U.S. Southern Command.

**Question:** In carrying out your duties, how will you work with the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, the Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, and the U.S. chiefs of mission to the countries in SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility?

**Answer:** If confirmed by the Senate, I plan to maintain the close working relationship between the Department of State and U.S. Ambassadors in the region with SOUTHCOM. As

appropriate, I will work with Department of State officials, including the Undersecretary for Political Affairs, the Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs, and the Assistant Secretary for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs to discuss policy issues of mutual interest. I will work with the U.S. Ambassadors and other members of the country teams to maintain a dialogue regarding critical issues in the region.

### **Major Challenges and Problems**

**Question:** In your view, what are the major challenges that will confront the next CINCSOUTH?

**Answer:** Transnational threats, Colombia, and democracies at risk. The transnational threats of arms and drugs trafficking, illegal migration, and terrorism constitute the greatest challenge to security and stability in the region at a time when many Governments are feeling the strain of weak economies, corruption, and growing discontent of the people as democratic and economic reforms fall short of expectations. Nowhere is this more evident than in Colombia, where the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN) and the United Self Defense Group (AUC), exact terror on the population of Colombia, financing their activities through drugs, kidnapping, and extortion. Colombia is the lynchpin in the Andean region, and as such, the United States has a vital interest in not only what happens in Colombia but also the spillover effects in bordering nations. Without a safe and secure environment, Colombia's fight for peace and stability cannot take hold. There are several countries in the region where democracy is at risk. It is imperative to remain active in assisting countries to maintain stability, promote prosperity, and enhance regional cooperation in this area of significant strategic importance to the United States while we execute the war on terrorism.

**Question:** Assuming you are confirmed, what plans do you have for addressing these challenges?

**Answer:** If confirmed, I intend to continue initiatives that enhance the professionalism of the region's militaries, advance democracy, promote regional security and hemispheric cooperation, and encourage prosperity. I would ensure prioritization of those activities in areas that offer the greatest leverage for protecting and advancing United States regional and global interests. The primary vehicle for accomplishing these goals remains the military-to-military contacts that strengthen the capabilities of the region's militaries to combat transnational threats, support democracy, and respect human rights and the rule of law. Plans must be adopted to assure our allies, dissuade foreign military competition, deter potential adversaries, and if this fails, defeat our adversaries, whether terrorists or nations. If confirmed, I would work to promote the strategic importance of the SOUTHCOM AOR in the overall security of the United States.

**Question:** What do you consider to be the most serious problems in the performance of the functions of CINCSOUTH?

**Answer:** Currently, 31 of 32 nations are under a democratic form of government. Cuba is the only exception. However, as I mentioned earlier, the transnational threats of arms and

drug trafficking, illegal migration, and terrorism are affecting the security and stability of the region.

The second is that many of the countries' democracies remain fragile stemming from the instability and corruption that evolve from these transnational threats. Without strengthening these fragile democracies we will not have a prosperous, democratic, and safe hemisphere free of current societal and economic ills. Partner nations have pledged varied levels of support to the war on terrorism. Prosperous and democratic nations will be more capable partners in achieving the goal of stamping out the transnational threats of arms and drug trafficking, illegal migration, and terrorism in the region.

**Question:** If confirmed, what management actions and time lines would you establish to address these problems?

**Answer:** If confirmed, I will immediately conduct a thorough assessment to build upon and modify where necessary current initiatives and programs to properly address these problems. I will work through established DOD venues and processes such as the Joint Warfighting Capabilities Assessment, Joint Requirements Oversight Council, and Integrated Priority List to identify critical SOUTHCOM requirements.

### **Priorities**

**Question:** If confirmed, what broad priorities will you establish in terms of issues which must be addressed by the CINCSOUTH?

**Answer:** As it is currently, a top priority for SOUTHCOM should remain to foster regional support for the war on terrorism by improving partner nation capabilities, ensuring U.S. operational access, and building reliable coalition partners. It is important that SOUTHCOM continue to assist in the strengthening of democracies in the region. Priority should be placed on those countries that offer the greatest leverage for protecting and advancing U.S. regional and global security interests. SOUTHCOM must also maintain the ability to conduct disaster relief, humanitarian assistance, and crisis response while supporting counterdrug activities to combat the scourge of drugs, which threatens both the U.S. and our partner nations.

### **Military to Military Contacts**

**In a May 6 speech to the annual conference of the Council of the Americas, Secretary of State Collin Powell stated "...we see a hemisphere that is more troubled than it was when we met a year ago, we see a hemisphere that has difficulties in many, many different ways – difficulty with their democratic institutions, difficulty with their economies."**

**Question:** With the exception of Cuba, do you see a role for military to military contacts and comparable activities in encouraging a democratic orientation of defense establishments and military forces of hemispheric nations?

**Answer:** During the past twenty-five years, nations Latin America and the Caribbean have made substantial progress toward achieving peace through democratically elected governments, economic development, and the subordination of the military to civilian authority. While we execute the war on terrorism, the U.S. must remain active in assisting these countries to maintain stability, promote prosperity, and enhance regional cooperation.

Given the geographic proximity and increased importance of the region, SOUTHCOM's theater security cooperation focuses on activities conducted with friendly nations that advance mutual defense or security arrangements, build capabilities for self-defense, and enable coalition operations while affording U.S. forces greater access, if needed, during crisis response. The great majority of these activities are executed through military to military contacts. Southern Command executes a variety of theater security cooperation activities seeking to expand United States influence and to reassure our friends while dissuading and deterring potential adversaries.

Continued military to military contacts in these areas lay the foundation for expanded cooperation in combating terrorism and enhancing regional cooperation.

### **Colombia**

**Question:** What do you consider the greatest threats to the survival of Colombia's democratic form of government?

**Answer:** The greatest threat to Colombia's democracy is the lack of a safe and secure environment for democratic institutions to take hold. The nexus of guerrillas, terrorists, drug-traffickers, and illegal self-defense forces has severely stressed the government's ability to exercise sovereignty and maintain security.

**To this date, the United States has restricted the use of the equipment it provides to the Colombian military and the Colombian military forces that are trained by U.S. forces in counterdrug activities.**

**Question:** In the event that Congress decides to amend existing laws so that Colombian military forces trained and equipped by the United States for counterdrug activities can be used by the Government of Colombia in its unified campaign against narcotics trafficking, terrorists activities, and other threats to national security, do you believe that this use of U.S. military assistance can contribute to greater security in Colombia, without leading to an increase in human rights violations by the Colombian military?

**Answer:** Yes I do. My understanding is that proposals to amend existing laws will still stipulate the rigorous human rights requirements necessary for U.S. military assistance. U.S. military assistance has contributed to the significant improvement in the respect for human rights and increased operational effectiveness of the Colombian military. The best evidence of this is in the results of the U.S. trained Counter Narcotics Brigade. The Counter Narcotics Brigade is the best-trained and equipped unit in the Colombian Army. It has had exceptional operational results during drug interdiction operations and provided the ground security necessary to execute Colombia's spraying efforts in southern Colombia. Importantly, there have been no allegations of human rights violations that I am aware of in the Counter Narcotics Brigade. Increased U.S.

support and training will help the human rights situation in Colombia while enhancing the Colombian military's capability to provide a safe and secure environment.

**Question:** How would you assess the commitment by the government and people of Colombia to addressing the multiple threats to its security?

**Answer:** The Pastrana administration has taken steps to improve the ability of the Colombian military to deal more effectively with threats to Colombia's security. He recently ordered the tour of duty for conscript soldiers to be extended and ordered the call up of up to 10,000 reservists to assist in the protection of critical infrastructure throughout the country. The strong support by the Colombian people for the dissolution of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's (FARC) safe haven indicates a firm commitment to bring law and order to the country.

### **Terrorist Threats in the Region**

**In recent months, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) has been stepping up its attacks in major Colombian cities, including Bogotá. In the past members of the U.S. Military Group at the U.S. Embassy have shown up on target lists of the FARC.**

**Question:** What measures are being taken to ensure the protection of U.S. military personnel in Colombia?

**Answer:** I understand that force protection measures in support of U.S. DOD personnel operating in Colombia are closely monitored. Prudent commanders continuously review and update force protection measures and conduct risk assessments and if confirmed, this will be one of my top priorities. The U.S. Military Group (USMILGP) Commander is charged with ensuring that appropriate measures are implemented, including close coordination with Colombian military forces, to safeguard U.S. DOD personnel. United States forces receive threat updates and antiterrorism awareness training prior to deployment, and conduct vulnerability assessments of the proposed training sites. The USMILGP possesses the means to contact deployed units at any time to provide early warning or additional guidance as necessary, and can initiate coordinated actions with the Colombian military to safeguard DOD personnel.

**In this testimony before the Committee on March 5 2002, Major General Gary Speer, USA, in his capacity as the Acting Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, stated that there was a viable terrorist threat in Latin America.**

**Question:** Would you give your assessment of the terrorist threat in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility and tell us what actions are being taken to address that threat, both in terms of force protection and defense of U.S. national interests?

**Answer:** Terrorist groups operating in SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility have demonstrated the capability and intent to conduct violent activity ranging from anti-government demonstrations to bombings. To date, terrorist activity in the SOUTHCOM area of operations

has been mainly domestic with some regional spillover. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army of Colombia (ELN) and the United Self Defense Group of Colombia (AUC) are all on the State Department's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Terrorist activity has been greatest in Colombia and there is an apparent resurgence of the Sendero Luminoso in Peru. International terrorist support organizations are operating mainly in the tri-border region of Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina. Terrorists have attacked U.S. persons and interests in the region and continue to issue threats against U.S. civilians, military members, and diplomatic personnel. The full extent of their capabilities and actions is unknown.

Force protection requirements are an integral part of all planning for the deployment of forces into a theater. SOUTHCOM conducts assessments of vulnerabilities to U.S. government facilities to update capabilities and procedures to protect U.S. citizens and other national interests. Additionally, SOUTHCOM conducts unilateral and combined training with forces from partner nations in the region. This provides U.S. forces with mission essential training and enables partner nations to be better prepared to counter terrorism within their borders.

### **Counterdrug Activities in Andean Ridge**

**Despite the expenditure of millions of dollars and the dedicated efforts of the men and women of the active force and the Reserves in the region, the Office of National Drug Control Policy advises that there was an 18 percent increase in overall Andean coca production in 2001. This was due to a 25 percent increase in coca cultivation in Colombia. Anecdotal information suggests that, despite major reductions from 1995 to 2001 in Bolivia and Peru, there has been an increase in coca cultivation in those countries thus far in 2002.**

**Question:** In view of that information, do you favor continued support by the U.S. military for U.S. and the Andean nations' counterdrug activities?

**Answer:** In terms of effectiveness, while I understand there has been an increase in Colombian coca production overall, in those areas where U.S.-supported Colombian Counternarcotics forces operate, there have been significant positive results.

Increasingly, terrorist organizations support themselves through drug trafficking. This trend is particularly troubling in Colombia where there are clear connections between drug trafficking, guerrillas, and terrorist activities. There are indications that in Peru, terrorist organizations may be funded by protecting coca cultivation. Therefore, there is value in United States counterdrug activities, which disrupt a significant source of funding for terrorism.

**Question:** Do you believe that the current programs that the Department supports are the most effective for the region?

**Answer:** United States counterdrug assistance to security forces helps nations in the region develop more effective counterdrug capabilities; however, drug trafficking organizations have shown considerable flexibility in adjusting their operations in reaction to counterdrug efforts. Further, I believe that the current programs conducted by DOD in the region have increased the professionalism, respect for human rights, and capabilities of the militaries in the



region. If confirmed, I will need to conduct my own assessment to determine if there are more effective means to pursue.

### **Air Interdiction Program**

**The air interdiction program over Colombia and Peru has been suspended since the accidental shutdown of a U.S. missionary plane in Peru on April 20, 2001. The Administration has indicated an intention to resume the program, with major changes to ensure against future mistakes, this year.**

**Question:** What can you tell us about the changes that will be made to the program?

**Answer:** As I understand, the Air Interdiction Program has undergone a policy review supported by investigations under the leadership of the Department of State. As a result of this review, the program will primarily be run by Peru and Colombia with support provided by the United States. The plan for the resumption involves the creation and use of a safety checklist onboard the tracker aircraft, and the verification of the proper use of this checklist by the on-board, Spanish-speaking, U.S.-contracted safety monitor. It also involves the conduct of a formal training course for all participants. Perhaps most significantly, the plan puts the emphasis on “force-down” operations instead of “shoot-down” operations.

**Question:** What involvement, if any, will SOUTHCOM have in the program?

**Answer:** SOUTHCOM’s role in the program will be to provide oversight to Joint Interagency Task Force East’s detection and monitoring assets. SOUTHCOM’s involvement will also include management of the overall involvement of Department of Defense forces.

### **Panama Canal**

**It has been several years since the United States turned the operation and maintenance of the Panama Canal over to the Government of Panama.**

**Question:** Now that the U.S. military no longer has permanent presence in Panama, what is your assessment of the Government of Panama’s ability to maintain and protect the Canal?

**Answer:** I understand the Panama National Canal Authority employs a staff of skilled and well-trained engineering and maintenance personnel capable of maintaining the canal in good working order. Since the turnover of the canal to Panama in December 1999, there have been no reports of degradation of maintenance, service, or effective operations. The Panama Canal authority employs an effective private security force working closely with the Panama National Police to safeguard key canal facilities. If confirmed, I will ensure SOUTHCOM continues to conduct risk assessments of the Panama Canal.

## **U.S. Northern Command**

**U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) is scheduled to be operationally effective October 1, 2002. As a result of the establishment of this new regional combatant command, SOUTHCOM's area of responsibility will no longer encompass various areas, including the Gulf of Mexico, Puerto Rico, the Bahamas, and Cuba.**

**Question:** What are the major challenges that will be involved in the process of transferring these areas to NORTHCOM's responsibility?

**Answer:** If confirmed, I will work closely with the commander of NORTHCOM to ensure a smooth transition of responsibilities for these areas. I envision a series of agreements to effect the initial transfer and to provide continuity of operations. Additionally, there will be a need for continual assessments to ensure that no seams exist between the two commands in protecting the security of the U.S.

**Question:** Do you foresee a transfer of responsibility for all of those areas on October 1, 2002 and, if so, are you confident that the transfer can be accomplished without adverse impact by that date?

**Answer:** The U.S. Southern Command staff has initiated planning for transition. In some cases there may be a need for a phased transition. If confirmed, I will work closely with the commander of NORTHCOM for an orderly transition.

## **Relocation of U.S. Army South**

**The Army is currently considering the possible relocation of U.S. Army South from Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico, to an installation in the continental United States.**

**Question:** In your view, what are the strategic requirements, if any, for maintaining the Headquarters, U.S. Army South, outside the continental United States?

**Answer:** In my view, SOUTHCOM does not have a strategic requirement for maintaining the Headquarters, U.S. Army South, outside the United States. However, no matter where the headquarters is located, it is very important to retain a dedicated component to maintain the necessary expertise and focus on regional missions.

## **Congressional Oversight**

**In order to exercise its legislative and oversight responsibilities, it is important that this committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress are able to receive testimony, briefings, and other communications of information.**

**Question:** Do you agree, if confirmed for this high position, to appear before this Committee and other appropriate committees of the Congress?

**Answer:** Yes I do.

**Question:** Do you agree, when asked, to give your personal views, even if those views differ from the Administration in power?

**Answer:** Yes I do.

**Question:** Do you agree, if confirmed, to appear before this Committee, or designated members of this Committee, and provide information, subject to appropriate and necessary protection, with respect to your responsibilities as the CINCSOUTH?

**Answer:** Yes I do.

**Question:** Do you agree to ensure that testimony, briefings and other communications of information are provided to this Committee and its staff and other appropriate committees?

**Answer:** Yes I do.