

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

THE NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

by

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ABSTRACT

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Several states within the National Guard are participating in the State Partnership Program, an international affairs mission to promote regional stability and civil-military relationships in support of US policy objectives. This program originated in the European Theater in 1993 due to the collapse of communism and the fall of the Soviet Union, but has spread to the Central Command, Southern Command, and Pacific Command areas of responsibility. There are currently 37 states, two territories, and the District of Columbia partnered with 42 countries around the world. The concept of the program is to bring "Hometown America" to these partnership countries by establishing military to military relationships and assisting the partnered countries in organizing, manning, and training democratic armies. Civil military relationships are established to show how the National Guard works with civilian officials in local emergencies and disasters. The purpose of this paper is to review the background and history of the State Partnership Program and how it supports the policy of security cooperation, its expansion into other theaters, its program goals and objectives; its relevancy to the current global situation as it pertains to the Global War on Terrorism; and recommend alternatives to current policy.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT..... iii

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS vii

THE NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM 1

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM2

HOW A PARTNERSHIP IS ESTABLISHED5

SUCCESSES OF THE PROGRAM 6

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROGRAM9

CONCLUSION12

ENDNOTES 15

BIBLIOGRAPHY 19

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FIGURE 12
FIGURE 2. PROPOSED STATE PARTNERSHIP LIFECYCLE MODEL7

THE NATIONAL GUARD STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

Several states within the National Guard are participating in the State Partnership Program, an international affairs mission which promotes regional stability and civil-military relationships in support of United States foreign policy objectives. This program originated in the European Theater in 1993 because of the collapse of communism and the fall of the Soviet Union. Its areas of responsibilities have consequently spread to the Central Command, Southern Command, and Pacific Command. Currently, thirty-seven states, two territories, and the District of Columbia are partnered with forty-two countries around the world. The concept of the program is to bring "Hometown America" to these partnership countries by establishing military to military relationships and assisting them in organizing, manning, and training democratic armies. Civil military relationships are established to show how the National Guard works with civilian officials in local emergencies and disasters. The purpose of this paper is to review the background and history of the State Partnership Program and how it supports the policy of theater security cooperation, its expansion into other theaters, its program goals and objectives; its relevancy to the current global situation as it pertains to the Global War on Terrorism; and recommend alternatives to current policy.

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the Berlin Wall in 1989, many opportunities were opened to foster democracy and peace. The Principals Committee of the National Security Council met to plan the war against Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks of September 11th against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. They knew that a vacuum was created by the former Soviet Union and that conditions were ideal for the rise of the Taliban to take over the country by Osama Bin Laden and the al Qaeda.¹ At a different meeting of the Principals Committee on October 29, 2001, they discussed the political objective and who would rule Afghanistan. The one thing that all did agree on was that after the Soviets had been thrown out in 1989, the United States made a big mistake when it walked away.² The United States had missed the golden opportunity to establish a relationship with Afghanistan that may have produced a democratic partnership. If a successful partnership had been established, would war have been avoided?

Fortunately, the United States did take the opportunity to establish partnerships with the former Soviet Union countries and they have made great strides to support these countries in their pursuit for democracy and peace through many programs. One such program, the National Guard State Partnership Program, was implemented for such a purpose and continues to expand to other parts of the world.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THE STATE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The State Partnership Program (SPP) created in July of 1992, became operational before the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace (PfP) program. Latvia became interested in a “military support to civil authorities” briefing, which was prepared and presented by the National Guard at a NATO/NACC-sponsored assistance visit. The Latvians wanted to learn more, so the National Guard Bureau was tasked by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy to prepare an assistance plan.

At the same time, EUCOM was in the process of implementing its Joint Contact Team Program (JCTP), which is part of the USEUCOM’s Military-to-Military Contact Program, to influence Russia and other Central and Eastern European countries to turn towards the United States. It was decided that a coordinated JCTP and SPP effort to obtain congressional funding beyond the first year would be more successful. Consequently, the National Guard was granted the lead to contact the Baltic States with a proviso that they would fall under the umbrella of the JCTP.³

This humble beginning transitioned into the National Guard State Partnership Program shortly thereafter and was formally established in 1993. It is presently completing its tenth successful year as a landmark international initiative. Having capitalized on the National Guard unique dual role of performing state missions under the control of the state’s governor and the federal missions,⁴ the SPP employed a proven principle to transition into its strategic shaping mission. Consequently, there are currently thirty-seven US states, two territories, and the District of Columbia (Figure 1) partnered with forty-two countries in Europe, Central Asia, the Far East, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.⁵



FIGURE 1

In his testimony to the Senate Appropriations Committee on 7 May 2003, Lieutenant General H. Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau outlined the activities of the SPP.

In that testimony, he stated, "National Guard members who serve as role models become a compelling argument for the ideals of democracy, professionalism, and deference to civilian authority."⁶ The program was formed in response to the radically changed political-military situation following the collapse of Communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union.⁷ The SPP is able to utilize not only the manpower, skills, and equipment within the National Guard, but the unique civilian skills and experience that each soldier possesses, the "citizen" aspects. These soldiers are also considered ambassadors who are representing both their communities and the United States. The National Guard is able to provide assistance consisting of instruction, orientation, and personnel exchanges in areas such as economic development, small business administration, and entrepreneurship. According to Lieutenant General Blum, the SPP also supports homeland security by helping to develop dependable and collaborative partners for the United States.⁸

The State Partnership Program seeks to establish and maintain peaceful relationships with each country. It is not intended to replace the bilateral relationships appropriate to national diplomacy, but is meant to enhance the established associations between the National Guard and its partner state by bringing "Hometown America" onto the international stage through these personal, sustained relationships.⁹ The objectives of the SPP are similar to the objectives for PFP and in fact mirror the goals of the Bush National Security Strategy. The SPP is actually a supporting program of the PFP even though the SPP was created two years earlier than the PFP.

The first objective of the SPP is to improve military operability between the United States and partner state forces.¹⁰ This objective specifically supports several goals of the National Security Strategy. By working to improve military operability, we are strengthening our alliances to defeat global terrorism and working to prevent attacks against us and our friends.¹¹ We can help our partner states to isolate and eliminate terrorists and weapons of mass destruction. The National Guard also supports the National Security Strategy goal of preventing our enemies from threatening us, our allies, and our friends with weapons of mass destruction.¹² This goal is accomplished by training our partner states to defend against a threat before an occurrence. The second objective states that SPP partner states must demonstrate military subordination to civil authority,¹³ and the SPP partner must demonstrate military support to civilian authorities,¹⁴ which is the third objective. The National Guard must demonstrate to their partner states how they subordinate themselves to civil authorities, both federal and state, and also support these same civil authorities at the same time when called upon to perform a mission. By doing so, we

move the partner state closer to achieving a democratic state. We also need to be able to rely on these partner states to assist the United States in defeating any adversary should deterrence fail.

Under these objectives, the SPP partner state and its assigned partner country must assist with the development of democratic institutions, and foster open market economies to help develop stability.¹⁵ The more mature phases of the SPP incorporate the concept of partnering the local sister communities civil leaders, which if done correctly, supports the goals of the National Security Strategy; specifically to “ignite a new era of global economic growth through free markets and free trade,”¹⁶ and “expand the circle of development by opening societies and building the infrastructure of democracy.”¹⁷ This helps to support free trade and domestic industries as well as helping these countries with aid to improve health care, education and agricultural development.

Lastly, the partner state must project and represent United States humanitarian values.¹⁸ This objective meets the goal in the National Security Strategy to “champion aspirations for human dignity.”¹⁹ We must be respectful of a partner state’s religion, but work with them to promote freedom of religion from government interference. We must promote the institution of democracy and human rights to move a partner state into the future.

Realistically, the State Partnership Program is not just a program between the National Guard and these partner countries, it is a way to achieve an end. This is a program that requires all elements of national power, i.e., diplomatic, informational, military and economic. This program also requires an interagency teaming effort to achieve a mature relationship with the partner countries. Many agencies are involved based on the specific country need. Agencies include the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies (DIILS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), US Customs, US Border Patrol, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).²⁰

The National Guard as a whole possesses the necessary force structure that is suitable for strategic shaping missions. Each state contains a variety of combat, combat service, and combat service support force structure. Governors command these units within their territorial boundaries using a politically appointed director called an Adjutant General, a federally-recognized two-star general who can be from the Air or Army National Guard of the respective state. Brigade and division structure is generally spread over two or more states. This is done for several reasons. One might be because of the historical connection a unit may have with a town, or a particular civilian skill may be prevalent to meet recruiting needs. More importantly, the force structure is spread throughout each state to meet the needs of the governor for his or

her consequence management needs. Consequently, if for example, Illinois is participating in a State Partnership Program mission that requires engineer structure which they do not have, they can go to another state that shares its brigade or division structure to make up the shortfall. If a state is in need of a specific kind of force structure, or is in need of a particular piece of equipment, it is common practice to coordinate with one or more states to acquire or borrow what is needed to complete the mission.

HOW A PARTNERSHIP IS ESTABLISHED

In order to establish a partnership, a country, or for the purposes of this paper, a potential partner state, submits a request to the U.S. ambassador of that country, who in turn, submits the request through the theater combatant commander. The request is then forwarded to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) who will select a U.S. state to partner with the potential partner state based upon relevant political, military, and socio-economic criteria that benefits both partners. For example, Thailand submitted a request to enter the program. After a careful analysis of economic, geographic, and other factors, it was determined that the State of Washington would be the best state to partner with Thailand because of its large number of people of Thai origin.²¹ The request is then forwarded by the National Guard Bureau back to the combatant commander who has the final approval on the nomination.²²

Upon approval, the National Guard Bureau notifies the state of the approved nomination, and also establishes the contacts with the now approved partner state and sets up all initial meetings. The Adjutant General of the selected state and his staff establish formal relations with the approved partner state only after the National Guard Bureau notifies the state that the association has been approved. A military liaison is assigned to the partner state who will coordinate a wide range of projects based on the country's needs, but the priority or the final step of the liaison is to assist the country in transitioning its military to be subordinate to civilian control. A plan is developed that specifies assistance required by the partner state to carry out democratic reforms and provides a context whereby US strategic objectives can be pursued.²³ Meetings are conducted, both in the U.S. and in the partner state's country. The National Guard host state will bring the necessary military personnel required to establish dialogue as well as political and civilian leaders to address that country's needs and desires. It is important that the representatives selected to participate from the civilian sector be committed to the goals and objectives of the State Partnership Program.²⁴ This essentially means that they are expected to genuinely participate and establish social, political, and economic partnerships dedicated to moving the country towards democratic ideals.

SUCSESSES OF THE PROGRAM

Three types of engagement methods are at the disposal of the State Partnership Program: military-to-military, military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian.

Military-to-military: The National Guard uses its military training and experience in accomplishing its assigned wartime mission and by participating in troop exchanges with partner countries. Latvian soldiers participated in a small unit exchange with the Michigan Army National Guard by “shadowing” the Guard infantry soldiers throughout their annual training period. According to Gorman, these exchanges do not constitute training, but seek to facilitate a flow of information and a shared military experience, thus solidifying their connection.²⁵

Exchanges have grown from the small unit level to larger exchanges that involve units from not only the National Guard, but the U.S. Marines, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Air Force personnel. A prime example was when engineering exercises were conducted between U.S. Navy Seabees, U.S. Marines, the Maryland National Guard and soldiers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. They renovated a soup kitchen in Tallinn, built a covered play area at an orphanage in Viljandi, and erected a bridge over a river at Poltsamas²⁶. The “New Horizons” exercise is also used much in the same manner. Several schools were built in Belize by engineers of the U.S. Marines as well as several different state National Guard engineer units in support of just one partnership. This exercise in 1999 was overseen by the Louisiana National Guard, which also provided medical units during their annual training period that traveled to many communities to provide basic medical services and immunizations to the civilian population. Many members of the medical units within the National Guard are civilian doctors, dentists, nurses, and medical technicians. This is one form of a military-to-civilian contact, but also includes such examples as improving a country’s emergency preparedness. A partnership conference was held in 1998 in Cincinnati, Ohio with Kentucky and its partnered country Ecuador, and West Virginia and its partnered country Peru. Attending the conference enabled civilian planners from the countries involved to come together to find ways to improve their emergency preparedness.²⁷

In February 2000, representatives from Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, and West Virginia attended the first Andean Region Conference on Disasters in Quito, Ecuador.²⁸ This event brought together Andean Ridge region neighbors, United Nations officials, and non-governmental organizations. At the conclusion of the event, Venezuela, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia signed a historical disaster cooperation agreement.

The most difficult phase of the relationship to establish is the civilian-to-civilian engagement. These types of relationships represent a mature relationship and can be seen in

older partnerships that have been successful in integrating other state government agencies and private businesses.²⁹ Maryland obtained scholarships for Estonian students to attend Maryland universities and to create distance learning programs.³⁰ North Carolina and Moldova possess a partnership that is economic, humanitarian and culturally focused. A North Carolina physician was able to get the pharmaceutical manufacturer Eli Lilly to donate \$77,000 worth of insulin to Moldova, which was suffering a severe insulin shortage.³¹ Many Moldovans have been able to come to North Carolina for surgery as a result of fundraisers that have been held to raise funds and solicit equipment for Moldovan clinics. Most importantly, the state of North Carolina has established a business commission to seek opportunities for North Carolina businesses in Moldova, and in turn, Moldovan companies and their products have found a market in North Carolina.³²

These three types of engagement (military-to-military, military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian), also correlate to the lifecycle of the SPP (see Figure 2).

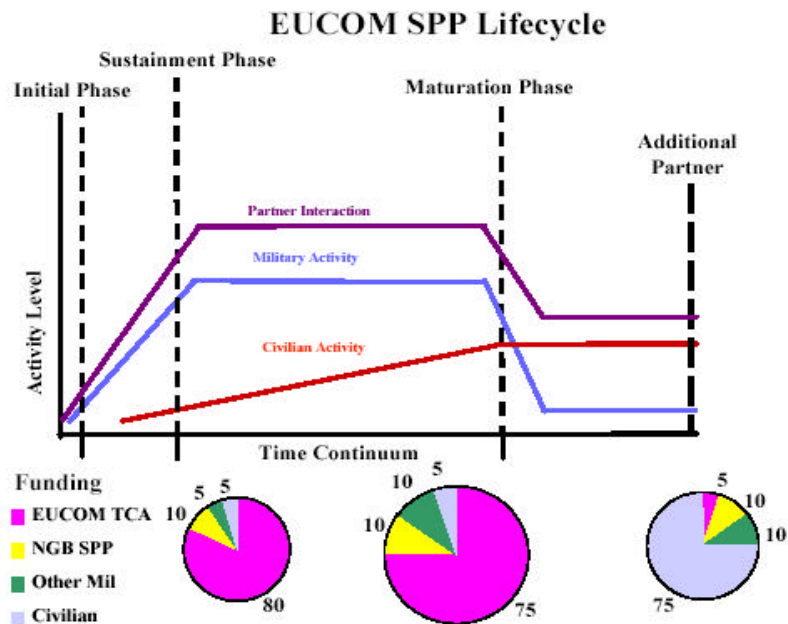


FIGURE 2. PROPOSED STATE PARTNERSHIP LIFECYCLE MODEL³³

Phase 1 (Initial Phase) – Introduction and development of a mutually beneficial relationship. Events include small unit exchanges and initial military support to civil authorities.

Phase 2 (Sustainment Phase) – This is the active growth phase of the partnership. This phase is characterized by the implementation of security cooperation campaign activities, larger unit exchanges, combined exercises between the partners and the expansion of their activities that are set as goals between the partners.

Phase 3 (Maturity Phase) – The partnership reaches maturation and transitions from one of military-oriented activities to one of civilian activities. During this phase, the partner country's relationship with the United States is stable but the preponderance of activities is facilitated through civilian agencies although military-to-military activities of interoperability continue to be pursued. It is expected at this point that the financial responsibility of the program will shift from the National to the civilian sector, which can include city, state or federal agencies as well as private entities.

When relationships reach maturity, the intent is not to sever it at an appointed time. It is intended, however, that the relationship evolve from an engagement and shaping tool overseen and carried out by the National Guard to one carried out by mostly civilian agencies, individuals, and organizations within a state. Many National Guard units do not want to see a relationship evolve to Phase 3 especially to the point where the National Guard has little to no involvement in the relationship that they have carefully developed and fostered for many years. They feel that the goal of transferring the financial responsibility in Phase 3 to civilian agencies is unattainable, and their greatest concern is their previous accomplishments will be undermined.³⁴ The National Guard Bureau, however, must ensure the states reach maturity with their partner countries. This means that a partnership in Phase 3 of the program should be between the civilian actors of each partnership with funding responsibility shifting to the civilian agencies. Shifting responsibilities in Phase 3 partnerships will also allow the National Guard to form new partnerships as well. Most importantly, it is a reflection of how well the State Partnership Program works and is able to achieve its goals.

The Maryland National Guard has been able to achieve a Phase 3 mature relationship with Estonia, but has not transitioned to a full civil-to-civil relationship. There are many successes to speak of in health, economic and educational initiatives. It appears, however, that the Maryland National Guard continues to nurture the relationship because the "civilians" involved in the initiatives are also members of the Guard, consequently never severing that tie. A colonel acting as the lead agent for economic development felt it was his job at this point in the mature relationship "to sow the seeds and let others build the relationship."³⁵

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROGRAM

There are many examples of the program's successes, more so than documented shortcomings. It appears that any setbacks are from a misunderstanding on what the National Guard unit is to do for the partner country. For example, a North Carolina engineer unit was accused of creating false expectations when they spent their two-week annual training building a hospital in Albania. An official there was sorely disappointed in the results because he expected a hospital comparable to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, DC.³⁶

The partnership between the State of Utah and the country of Belarus has been formally dissolved³⁷ even though the 1999 EUCOM report praised the partnership for its accomplishments.³⁸ Neither reference gives specific details as to what led to the dissolution other than a "diplomatic dispute", but the NGB FY 02 annual report does state that the partnership was dissolved "due to politics and the country's inability to comply with security cooperation requirements."³⁹

Other failures or setbacks are difficult to find whereas examples of successes are abundant. In the paper written by Albert Gorman,⁴⁰ he did not detail specific failures, but outlined key lessons from a very mature partnership between Maryland and Estonia. This partnership, which began in 1993, has evolved from a pure military relationship where many military familiarity exercises and exchanges were conducted to lay the groundwork for subsequent civilian activities to one that concentrates on facilitating exchange efforts in the education and business arenas to foster open market economies to help develop and maintain stability, and in the area of health and medical initiatives that supports the SPP objective to project and represent our humanitarian values.⁴¹

There are key lessons learned from the initial civilian partnering that are beneficial to any U.S. state interested in starting a new partnership with another country, or to improve a current partnership. Prior to civilian-to-civilian exchanges, it was important for the Maryland National Guard to conduct military-to-military events to prove to Estonia that Maryland was committed to the relationship.⁴² Maryland possesses a growing Estonian population that provided a natural vehicle for civilian opportunities, so they worked to get buy-in from local groups with a similar heritage as Estonia.⁴³ After-action reviews subsequent to each partner event are the key to tailoring future exchanges,⁴⁴ and programs must be constantly reviewed for effectiveness throughout the partnership.⁴⁵ One cannot assume that a program does not need to be reviewed after execution. Assuming the partnership will grow on its own is a mistake that must be

avoided. Relationships in their infancy must be nurtured and monitored for progress of the relations. It is extremely important to follow-up on verbal commitments made to the partnered country.

More specifically, there are key lessons learned from the economic development initiatives.⁴⁶ For this relationship, Maryland and Estonia agreed to focus on the information technology sector instead of simultaneously pursuing several sectors at once so that both partners would realize the potential rewards; i.e., Maryland would benefit from the business it would bring to its economy and Estonia would benefit from the upgraded technology it will bring to help it improve its economy in the long-term. Then-Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend also traveled to Estonia to meet with officials to include the President of Estonia. This visit demonstrated high-level commitment to the Estonians to the partnership by the State of Maryland.

According to Mark Bour, standardization of events and metrics are highlighted as events that need improvement and modification.⁴⁷ The National Guard Bureau must establish ways to evaluate partnerships for their validity and cost-effectiveness to ensure they are meeting the established program objectives.

Groves stated in his 1999 article, there are five challenges that the United States must be cognizant of to ensure the longevity of the program.⁴⁸

- Refrain from seeking objectives that are unreasonable, or that could create expectations that cannot be fulfilled.⁴⁹
- The potential for the misapplication of military force by political interests must be carefully monitored as the militaries in the former Soviet Union are given new directions with greater professionalism.⁵⁰ It would not meet our national security goals or the objectives of the SPP to build a competent military force only to see them used for purposes other than for democratic principles.
- Most of the dialogue established thus far with the partner states has been military in nature. Both military and civilian representatives must be given the opportunity to personally observe firsthand the results that are achievable when democracy and market economies are at work and when both take precedence over the military.⁵¹
- Many former Soviet Union countries have difficulty in grasping the concept that their military must be under the control of a democratic institution. Some see the size of their army as the indicator of their status and as a means to deter aggression. Getting a partnered country to understand the need to minimize the

need for a large standing military is a challenge and must continue to be a priority in order to continue to support both PfP and SPP goals.⁵²

- It will eventually become evident that military-to-military relations can only do so much, but nevertheless, it has introduced the citizen-soldier concept to the partner states and sought to advance the democratic concept of civilian control over the military as well as military support to civil authority. These are difficult concepts for many to grasp, but continued exposure is important.⁵³ A partner state may be unable to provide the opportunity for “would-be citizen soldiers”, or maybe they cannot provide the conditions for a citizen to work in the civilian sector, but also serve part-time as a member of the military and be compensated for it.

Economically, this may be even more difficult to achieve in poorer countries.

Merging separate cultures such as the active component and the National Guard is complicated even in the best of circumstances. They both claim the same ideals, but possess different expectations and methods to legally accomplish some missions. In the past, some states allowed politics to interfere with program activity and did not send quality personnel to fill the Military Liaison Team (MLT) billets, which support the JCTP. Some states even chose to “bypass EUCOM bureaucratic procedures, in some cases acting almost as sovereign nations conducting their own foreign policy.”⁵⁴ The active component also did not fully embrace the National Guard as it does today, so it was important for them to educate the National Guard in the proper procedures and protocol required of the SPP.

Based on comments from the EUCOM commander, General Joseph W. Ralston, the biggest “customer” of the SPP, this program “will continue to be an integral part of our strategy to foster ability and democracy in Eastern Europe.”⁵⁵ The introduction to this same report states, “The State Partnership Program is important to the U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) for the *practical, short-term assistance* provided to participating countries which in turn serves the strategic, long-term interests of fostering democratic principles throughout the region.”⁵⁶ (italics added). If one looks at just the issue of terrorism and the possibility of terrorist organizations taking over failed states and the long term implications that go with it, the value of using the National Guard as one of the tools, or means to help strategically shape failed states into a democratic, or at least a semi-democratic state is in the best interest of the United States.

CONCLUSION

NSC 68, published April 14, 1950, was written during the Cold War to provide courses of action open to the United States regarding its relationship with Russia.⁵⁷ The ideas and ideals of the document still ring true.

The democratic way is harder than the authoritarian way because, in seeking to protect and fulfill the individual, it demands of him understanding, judgment, and positive participation in the increasingly complex and exacting problems of the modern world. It demands that he exercise discrimination: that while pursuing through free inquiry the search for truth he knows when he should commit an act of faith; that he distinguish between the necessity for tolerance and the necessity for just suppression. A free society is vulnerable in that it is easy for people to lapse into excesses—the excesses of a permanently open mind wishfully waiting for evidence that evil design may become noble purpose, the excess of faith becoming prejudice, the excess of tolerance degenerating into indulgence of conspiracy and the excess of resorting to suppression when more moderate measures are not only more appropriate but more effective.⁵⁸

It is highly improbable and not realistic for the United States to expect all countries to adopt the same ideals, but it is important to work with countries in all regions in the world to demonstrate how democracy works to attain peace and stability. In order to achieve the policy goals as outlined in the National Security Strategy, one way to this end is the National Guard.

The National Guard possesses many of the assets needed for these military-to-military, military-to-civilian, and civilian-to-civilian partnerships; i.e., engineers, transportation, and medical as well as all of the combat arms. Many members of the National Guard are prominent citizens in their communities thereby providing the civilian links needed to move into the mature phases of the partnership.

The State Partnership Program is seen as a National Guard-only program by most people when its benefits and resources should be fully embraced by all to assist this country in meeting its national security goals. Combatant commanders see the value of using the military to change another state's ideas and ideals to match the United States. To bring another country under the same ideas and ideals, we must use the National Guard as an organization that we know is in agreement with the same values. The National Guard is well-suited to do this because of its direct connection to both the people of America and the U.S. military. It serves the strategic national interests of this country by using the National Guard to influence the will of the people of this country when we must defeat any enemy that threatens our national interests, and if necessary, use force when deterrence fails. It also makes sense to use the National Guard to serve the strategic national interests of this country to continue to expand the State Partnership Program, as a way to achieve an end that combines all elements of power. We are

finding that some of the raw materials needed for our military equipment may need to come from a foreign country. We must keep a "foothold" in other countries for the many reasons already outlined in this paper, but also to acquire the resources needed to maintain our military as a whole when our own industrial base is either unable or unwilling to support our needs.

Significant challenges are ahead for the National Guard Bureau to continue administering the State Partnership Program and to also meet the operational demands of homeland security and Operation Iraqi Freedom missions. According to *USA Today*,⁵⁹ reserve component units will make up 37 percent of the force in Iraq in 2004. Many of the units necessary to support nation building operations are being called upon to participate. Many of those left have recently returned or are in the process of returning from war. The National Guard Bureau and the states must not use this as an excuse to let the State Partnership Program lapse with any of our partner countries. Partnerships can be moved into other phases of the program predicated on the involvement of the local civil leaders and the interagency participation. It appears that the State Partnership Program will atrophy from neglect if a collective effort is not mustered.

The success stories of the State Partnership Program in the EUCOM area of responsibility are examples that have caused this program to spread to other regions in the world. Combatant commanders have seen how the State Partnership Program can greatly assist them in administering their theater security cooperation programs. As stated in Figure 2, the SPP has expanded and grown to thirty-seven states, two territories, and the District of Columbia, all of which support forty-two countries. The program continues to grow in spite of the current operational tempo of the National Guard. The projects completed and the time spent with the partner countries are not just great annual training locations for these units, nor are they vacations for the part-time soldiers. Each project incorporates mission essential training tasks as well as the civilian experience of the soldiers. These partnerships have an added benefit to the state as a recruiting and retention tool providing a possible incentive to attract and retain the National Guard's most important resource, its soldiers.

The benefits reaped from the State Partnership Program for the soldiers, the partner countries, and ultimately the national security of the United States is invaluable and will continue to promote democracy throughout the world. The National Guard is simply one means, or one tool to use to achieve this end.

WORD COUNT= 5308

ENDNOTES

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² Ibid, 275.

³ Marybeth Peterson Ulrich. *Democratizing Communist Militaries: The Cases of the Czech and Russian Armed Forces*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 60-61.

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