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Threat to U.S. National Security Greater Than Ever Before, Says Purple Dragon

—**Bedford, MA, May 2, 2008** - “Although not clear to many people here in the United States, the threat posed to our national security by totalitarian powers has not diminished since the end of the Cold War; it has merely changed its form and is even greater today than every before.” So, says one of the survivors of the original 17 members of the Operation PURPLE DRAGON team.

Borrowing the rubric, PURPLE DRAGON, from his team’s nickname, and speaking from the dais in the Conference room of Building M on the Mitre Corporation campus, William Johnston, Lieutenant-Commander, U.S. Navy (Retired) delivered a special, invitee-only briefing that touched on the totalitarian nature of Transnational Terrorism and the basic principles for achieving a high state of Operations Security (OPSEC) in the current threat environment.

In his briefing, Johnston noted that one of the totalitarian powers now on the move here in the early 21st Century shares many characteristics with the totalitarian powers that were on the move during the mid-20th Century. “During World War II, at great cost in human life and material resources, the U.S. and its allies successfully engaged and defeated the forces of totalitarianism represented by Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Shinto Japan.”

Johnston recounted that, “Almost immediately following the end of that hot war, the prolonged cold war with totalitarian forces of Communism represented by the former U.S.S.R. and its proxies began. In addition, the U.S. battled, with obviously mixed results, first in Northeast Asia’s Korea in the early 1950s, then in Southeast Asia’s Vietnam during the 1960s and early 1970s, in attempts to stem the seemingly inexorable spread of totalitarian communism throughout the Eurasian Continents.”

Following up, Johnston said, “Today, we are faced once again by a totalitarian threat; this time it is in the form of radical Islamism, sometimes called ‘political Islam.’ In the ‘bad old days,’ we were dealing with issues of political ideology easily comprehensible to people with a Western mind set; now that’s not so. Today, the issues are much more complex and are replete with nuances based upon Eastern religio-ideological culture. This type of thinking has no place in the Western mind set. What this means is, because the threat we face is neither easy to see nor understand, attaining and maintaining a high state of Operations Security is even more important today than ever before:”

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When asked about his interest in transnational terrorism, Lieutenant-Commander Johnston explained that his interest began in 1983, when members of his wife's extended family were brutally murdered and mutilated by their long time, next door neighbors, and stemmed from his desire to understand their motivations.

Lieutenant-Commander Johnston made his visit to Mitre at the request of Ms. Valerie Simpson. Ms. Simpson, who earned her certification as an OCP in 2003, is the only designated OCP (OPSEC Certified Professional) resident at Hanscom Air Force Base. The highly coveted OCP designation is awarded by the Operations Security Professionals Society (OPS), a non-governmental organization, only to individuals who have met the rigorous standards imposed by the OPS.

Johnston, following his first six years of service in the U.S. Navy, primarily with the U.S. Naval Security Group in the Communications Technician rating, served 16 years as a commissioned officer in various command and staff billets involving operations, communications, intelligence, weapons, and training. His expertise in Operations Security matters is built upon service including duties as Intelligence Specialist, Production Center, Defense Intelligence Agency; Commanding Officer, U.S.S. POLK COUNTY (LST-1084); and Naval Operational Intelligence Staff Officer, Operations Security Branch, U. S. Pacific Command, where he was one of the original 17 members of the Operations Security Branch (unclassified nickname: PURPLE DRAGON).

On completion of the latter tour of duty, he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for "leadership and outstanding ability to develop new techniques" and for "being a leading pioneer in the development and application of a highly effective methodology that became the model then applied to U.S. military and naval operations worldwide."

He served his final tour of duty as Director of Training, U.S. Pacific Fleet Training Center, San Diego.

He is authorized to wear the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2 awards), Korean Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 11 Campaign Stars, United Nations Service Medal, Republic of Viet Nam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon.

Lieutenant-Commander Johnston, a graduate of the OPSEC Program Manager Course, earned his degrees of Bachelor of Business Administration (Magna cum Laude) and Master of Business Administration (With Distinction) from National University.

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