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## My Phone Call With Col. Hapgood of the Iowa National Guard About Training for House to House Search for a "Weapons Dealer"

I just had an interesting and rather emotional phone call with Col Hapgood, Public Affairs Officer, of the IA National Guard (Pete of [WRSA](#) sent me his phone number). I introduced myself as a veteran and a writer for S.W.A.T. Magazine, and said I needed confirmation and clarification on the [planned house to house search exercise](#) scheduled for Arcadia Iowa for April 2-5, 2009 because people were very, very concerned.

The Colonel told me it is only to prepare them for Afghanistan and Iraq.

He said that there are no full time military in Iowa, and therefore no place to train in the state to get them ready for MOUT and that is why they used local towns.

He said they were baffled by all this [uproar] because it is just routine training to prepare them for deployment to combat in urban environments overseas.

I asked him why that particular scenario was picked - of having NG troops searching for a "weapons dealer."

He said that in Afghanistan and Iraq, they have to do searches for weapons caches and need to train for it, and it has nothing whatsoever to do with domestic deployment or any plans for domestic use.

I asked him that question twice - "so, it is not for domestic use or training for future domestic use?" And he said no, not at all.

I told him, in no uncertain terms, that Americans, especially gun owners, were extremely concerned because of the current political climate and because of the potential for civil unrest in the future because of the economy - we hear all manner of rumors about preparations for such disturbances - and the use of a scenario of searching for a gun dealer seems aimed at gun owners - and in particular we are concerned because of who is now in power.

As an example of why we are concerned, I told him how Rahm Emanuel, who is called "the second most powerful man in America" [gave a speech](#) before the Brady Bunch in 2007 advocating that anyone on the no-fly list be stripped of their right to keep and bear arms, and anyone can be put on that list at any time.

I told him that we know they want to disarm us.

And that is why folks are so very alarmed by this exercise.

I also told him that there were people planning on going there to protest.

He responded by saying that while he did not want to get into politics, he could assure me that all of the people in the Iowa National Guard are the most dedicated supporters and defenders of the Constitution and also of the right to bear arms.

And I responded by saying yes, I took that oath too - most of us did - and we just want to be sure that oath is kept, and [the very last thing we ever want to see](#) in this country is it being veteran against veteran (and this is where my voice cracked and I got rather emotional), but, I told him. we are very concerned and our radar is up because the people in power in DC have no respect for the Constitution or our rights and that is why folks wanted confirmation and clarification of this story.

I was going to remind him of what happened during Katrina, to let him know how disturbing that was to many patriots, but because he was so frank, and sounded so sincere when he said that the people in the Iowa NG are dedicated defenders of the Constitution and of the right to bear arms, I did not do that to him.

### MY THOUGHTS AFTER THE PHONE CALL:

That was a tough goddamn phone call for me. I truly hope that all men and women in uniform remember, and keep, their oath. I never, ever want to see in my lifetime veterans having to fight against our own troops in defense of our rights. God forbid it.

I still have some serious concerns about this kind of training going on - especially when it is not made clear to the public that it is for training in preparation for overseas, and the "civilians" are supposed to be Afghan villagers and Iraqis.

But even with those qualifications, I still don't like it, since the troops are *still* going door to door, *in America*, searching for weapons, and that is still conditioning them for that very act, regardless of the intent.

And I don't think the Colonel or the National Guard troops understand fully just how on edge people in this country are, and how suspicious we are (for very good reason) of anything the government does that even hints at martial law or going house to house in America looking for weapons.

And however sincere the Colonel or the rest of the troops in the NG, we still DO NOT trust the politicians in DC, who have already demonstrated that their oath to support and defend the Constitution was some damn joke, since they violate it all the time.

The forked tongued bastards in DC cynically roll their eyes and mouth the oath with a bored expression on their faces because it is a mere formality before they get power and perks. They don't mean it. They have nothing but contempt for the restraints in the Constitution.

But when us veterans took that oath to defend the Constitution and this Republic against all enemies, foreign and domestic we MEANT IT with all our heart and soul, ready to give our lives to keep it.

And we still mean it, because that oath was for life.

I sure hope to hell that what the Colonel said about the NG troops' commitment to defend the Constitution is true, and I hope that if/when The Day comes, they will side with the people, and not the politicians.

But I still feel like something else is needed to express to these troops our concerns, and our resolve, and to remind them of their oaths, and of our oath. It is just too important and vital an issue to leave to chance.

We need to be sure they will be oath keepers when the chips are down.

Stewart Rhodes

UPDATE:

During our phone conversation, earlier today (Feb 20), Col. Hapgood told me that the Guard unit from Carroll Iowa would be training in the nearby town of Arcadia because there was no full time military facility in Iowa for them to train at. But then Col. Hapgood later, at my request, emailed me a written explanation of the exercise. That written statement says, in explanation of the use of a real town to train:

"this enables our Soldiers to gain proficiency in the exact tasks they will be conducting in combat but without having to travel several hours to Camp Dodge, which is the only military training facility in Iowa."

So, which is it? Is there no place else for them in Iowa to do this training except a local town, or is there in fact a place in Iowa for them to do such training but it is just too far for them to drive?

Pete, from WRSA, confirmed that he was told the same thing on the phone - that there was no place in Iowa for them to do this training except in a town - and then the email to him also contained the same mention of Camp Dodge, several hours away in Iowa. ([go here](#) for Pete's full post with his comments).

Setting aside that discrepancy, does it really come down to just a difference of a few hours drive time saved? The written response suggests that it does. Frankly, I would think a few hours drive time and fuel expended is worth it to avoid the Pavlovian conditioning of soldiers to search American homes for guns, and of citizens to comply. And especially considering the suspicion and uproar this particular exercise has caused, it would seem worth it to just go train at Camp Dodge.

Now, certainly a real town, with real people in it is more realistic for training, but given the particular scenario presented, of house to house searches for a "weapons dealer" this was not a very swift move in the current political environment, with gun hating extremists in control of the Executive Branch, and with truly evil legislation such as HR 45 already proposed which make it very, very clear that they fully intend to treat gun owners like pedophiles.

HR 45 would require the registering, printing, and tracking of gun owners just as if they


were convicted child molesters, with a requirement that you report a change of residence to Attorney General Holder (you know, that nice man from the Clinton Admin). And the Democrats want to require all sales, even between family, friends or neighbors, to go through a dealer with a full Brady check - so, if that legislation is passed, **any of us** could become illegal "weapons dealers" just for doing what Americans have done for hundreds of years - sell a rifle, shotgun, or pistol to another private citizen.

One last point: The absolute "Red Dawn" scenario that gun owners fear is a declaration of martial law, followed by roadblocks, "cordoning" off areas, and then house to house searches by troops for weapons, and the confiscation of any weapons found, with deadly military force applied to any resisters. That is the nuclear war, Armageddon scenario for gun owners, and yet that is precisely what the Iowa National Guard has planned to practice - without even attempting to explain that it is supposed to mimic searches for guns in Afghanistan, not an actual gun confiscation in the U.S.

And all this in the current political environment, with sworn, public enemies of our right to bear arms in control of the office of the Presidency, both houses of Congress, and all of the massive power of the Executive Branch at their finger tips.

And the good Colonel is puzzled by the uproar?

UPDATE II: The National Guard of Iowa [has canceled](#) the planned mock "invasion" and house to house searching of Arcadia, Iowa.

Posted by Stewart Rhodes at 4:19 PM 

Labels: Arcadia Iowa National Guard, barricades, gun owners worried about National Guard training , house to house search, HR 45, search for guns

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