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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Survey Finds Nation Vulnerable to EMP Attack: States Not Preparing

Anchorage, AK – March 7, 2007 – America’s state-based emergency responders are not actively preparing against an attack on the United States by electromagnetic pulse, according to a survey of state Adjutants General who oversee National Guard units throughout the country. Such an attack could disable most of the nation’s electric power grid, telecommunications, automobiles and computers with a single, high altitude, nuclear blast. An EMP attack is an increasingly likely possibility as ballistic missile and nuclear technology continue to proliferate, the survey’s organizers said.

The survey, entitled *Missile Defense and the Role of the States*, was conducted jointly during the last year by the Anchorage-based Institute of the North and the Claremont Institute of Claremont, California. The survey’s questions were sent to Adjutants General of all 50 states, with more than half of the states’ top Guard officials responding to the questionnaire.

Although 96% of state Adjutants General indicated significant concern over an EMP attack, the majority had done little or no analysis of the impact of an overhead EMP attack to potential targets in their particular state. Likewise, most admitted little or no preparation in the areas of training, equipment/EMP hardening, and exercises/procedure.

This finding differs with a 2004 recommendation by the congressionally mandated Commission to Assess the Threat to the United States from EMP Attack, which urged states to coordinate with the federal government to prepare an emergency response plan against EMP: “Working with state authorities and private-sector organizations, the Department of Homeland Security should develop draft protocols for implementation by emergency and other government responders following EMP attack, Red Team these extensively, and then institutionalize validated protocols through issuance of standards, training, and exercises.”

An electromagnetic pulse is created by detonating a nuclear warhead between 40 and 400 kilometers above the earth’s surface. The electromagnetic field created by the nuclear detonation at that altitude creates a “pulse” which can disrupt and disable electronic computers, electric power, telephone and information systems over a significant geographic area. Furthermore, a space-based nuclear blast could also disable satellites that would enable the U.S. to identify the source of and respond to such an attack.

The 2004 EMP report noted that, “...one or a few high-altitude nuclear detonations can produce EMP effects that can potentially disrupt or damage electronic and electrical systems over much of the United States, virtually simultaneously, at a time determined by an adversary.” The executive summary of the EMP Commission report is viewable online at www.missilethreat.com/empreport.

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The Institute of the North/Claremont Institute survey indicates that National Guard leaders would like increased briefings on the missile threat in general and the EMP threat in particular. While 74% of Adjutants General had been briefed on the threat from Russian ballistic missiles, only 44% had received briefings on the threat posed by ship-borne or “stateless” missiles, and 41% indicated that they received no regular briefings regarding ballistic missile threats.

Survey results also highlight overwhelming agreement (93%) that the United States needs an effective missile defense system. A majority of survey respondents supported a “layered” missile defense, composed of ground-, sea-, air-, and space-based interceptors. Furthermore, 59% of participants stated that they envisioned their state’s National Guard having a role in the development, testing, manning and deployment of missile defense systems which could prevent an EMP attack overhead.

None of the Adjutants General surveyed indicated that they were actively involved in a formal planning process on EMP attack. The survey authors suggest policy options urging states to direct contingency planning in which they create their own realistic scenarios that demonstrate the potential effects of cruise and ballistic missiles, weapons of mass destruction, and EMP attack, thus increasing state preparedness. States are also encouraged to coordinate defense efforts with the Department of Homeland Security.

“A question state policy makers may want to ask themselves is, ‘Does our state have an EMP contingency plan?’” said Mead Treadwell of the Institute of the North: “If not, we should get on with it, as the EMP Commission recommends.”

“The United States Congress has continued the EMP Commission’s work since it issued its report in 2004,” said Tom Karako of the Claremont Institute. “Their report was published the same day as the 9/11 Commission, but it has been too long ignored.”

Survey results and a summary report were mailed to state governors and Adjutants General for their review. Based on the survey’s findings, the Institute of the North and the Claremont Institute plan to follow-up by publishing a regular newsletter highlighting ways in which state military leaders and policy makers can raise awareness and increase involvement in their state. Both institutes have been working closely together for more than 10 years on policy issues related to the strategic defense of the United States. Their goal is to help state and local officials and citizens understand the issues related to ballistic missile defense.

The project was initiated by Treadwell, a senior fellow at the Institute of the North, and Karako, editor of www.missilethreat.com, an online project of the Claremont Institute. Both are members of an independent working group which recently published the report, “*Missile Defense, the Space Relationship, and the Twenty-First Century*,” available online at www.ifpa.org. A complete project report on *Missile Defense and the Role of the States* may also be viewed at www.missilethreat.com and www.institutenorth.org.

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The Institute of the North, based in Anchorage, Alaska, is a non-profit educational and research center founded in 1994 by former Governor Walter J. Hickel focusing on strategic and natural resource issues.

The Claremont Institute publishes the Claremont Review of Books, sponsors educational fellowships for rising young leaders, and administers a variety of public policy programs, including Americans for Victory over Terrorism and Missilethreat.com, devoted to promoting the strategic defense of the United States.