

Tip of the Sphere



Above: Vice President Dick Cheney, GEN Ralph E. "Ed" Eberhart, U.S. Northern Command commander, and Lynne Cheney share the stage before hearing the vice president thank the Soldiers, civilians and contractors who do so much for the homeland defense effort.

Right: Vice President Cheney addresses the troops at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo. *Photos by Ed White*



CHENEY PRAISES MILITARY COMMAND FOR HOMELAND DEFENSE EFFORTS

By Ed White

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Amid a din of cheers and chants of “USA, USA, USA,” about 1,200 military and civilian employees listened to the message that Vice President Dick Cheney brought during his Aug. 2, visit to the mountain base. The stated purpose of his visit was to express his appreciation to the military and civilian force that constitutes and supports the U. S. Northern Command.

“Your mission here is nothing less than the defense of America’s land, sea and air space. In our vast, open nation that is a heavy responsibility and you meet it every day,” Cheney said. “The terrorists will fail because men and women like you stand in their way.”

The vice president’s message was not lost on his audience. Many have served either in Afghanistan, Iraq or both. He said, “The enemy is perfectly prepared to slaughter anyone, man, woman or child, to advance its cause. This is not a foe we can reason with or negotiate with or appease. This is, to put it simply, an enemy we must vanquish. And we will vanquish this enemy.”

In describing the administration’s policy on handling the terror threat he said, “President Bush is determined to remove threats before they arise instead of simply waiting for another attack on our country.”

The homeland has become a battleground Cheney noted and added, “That is why NORTHCOM is such a critical addition to our military strategy.”

Citing NORTHCOM’s and U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command’s efforts he noted, “We have made extraordinary

progress toward deploying a National Missile Defense system. And that is one of the great contributions to national security over the last three years.”

Cheney also outlined the administration’s goals in support of the military. “Our job is to provide you with the best possible equipment to do your missions, to make sure you receive the end pay you deserve and to support military families at home. We have made that commitment to you, and we will keep it,” he stated.

He made special mention of the importance of the military family in support of their service members.

“At bases around the world, from here at Peterson, to Camp Pendleton, to Yongsan Garrison in South Korea, my wife, Lynne and I have witnessed the selfless devotion and courage of our military families,” he said. “America is enormously proud of our military families.”

He also thanked the active, reserve and National Guard component members for their service to the nation.

“In their courage and sacrifice, America’s Guardsmen and Reservists have earned the respect and gratitude of the entire nation.”

The vice president’s final message was clearly stated.

“We understand the threats before us and we have the resources, the strength and the moral courage to overcome them.”

Ed White has 18 years experience in military public affairs and is currently an editorial assistant working for the FDIC to help produce the Army Space Journal.