



**BRIGADIER GENERAL DON T. RILEY, COMMANDER,
MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION, AT THE MISSISSIPPI
VALLEY FLOOD CONTROL ASSOCIATION MEETING,
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA, 6 DEC 02**

HOPE AND PARADOX

**CONGRESSMAN BERRY, MR GRUGETT, MR. SMYTH, GENERAL FLOWERS,
GENERAL GRIFFIN, MEMBERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER COMMISSION, AND
FELLOW FRIENDS OF THE RIVER. WHAT AN HONOR TO BE HERE AND TO SPEAK
AT THIS GATHERING OF AMERICAN PATRIOTS. THANK YOU FOR THE
INVITATION.**

**AS YOU KNOW, THIS IS MY FIRST MEETING WITH THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY FLOOD
CONTROL ASSOCIATION AND I VERY MUCH LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH
YOU.**

**NOW MANY OF YOU ARE PROBABLY THINKING THAT IT WASN'T THAT LONG AGO
THAT GENERAL ED ARNOLD OR EVEN GENERAL PHIL ANDERSON WAS HERE
SPEAKING TO YOU.**

**OR SOME OF YOU ARE QUIETLY WHISPERING, HECK, IT SEEMS LIKE YESTERDAY
THAT GENERAL FLOWERS WAS HERE AS THE DIVISION COMMANDER –
ESPECIALLY IF YOU COMPARE THE DURATION OF OUR ASSIGNMENTS TO THE
STABILITY OF THAT GREAT AMERICAN, MR GEORGE GRUGETT.**

WELL I THINK DILBERT CAPTURED THE PICTURE WELL:

(SHOW 3 DILBERT CARTOON SLIDES)

CHIEF, I'LL STOP ON THAT SUBJECT WHILE I'M AHEAD.

**NOW I HAVE HEARD MANY GOOD THINGS ABOUT THIS WONDERFUL
ORGANIZATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MEETING. AND I KNOW THAT
CONGRESSMAN BERRY AND MR GRUGETT INTEND TO ACCOMPLISH MUCH HERE
THIS WEEK.**

**IN THAT VEIN, I WOULD LIKE TO PROD OUR THINKING SOMEWHAT AND TALK
ABOUT HOPE AND PARADOX. FIRST, HOPE IS WHAT THIS ORGANIZATION
PROVIDES. SECOND, THE PARADOX. AS WE SEEK WHAT IS IN THE BEST**

INTERESTS OF AMERICA, THERE ARE AVID DETRACTORS WHO THINK THEY ARE DOING THE SAME. AND WE MUST MASTER THIS PARADOX.

I DON'T STAND HERE AS ONE THINKING I HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS. AND CERTAINLY I CAN NEVER GET AWAY WITH THAT ATTITUDE AROUND THE HOUSE. I MIGHT RELATE A STORY FROM A RECENT TRIP THAT ROZ AND I TOOK TO HER HOMETOWN OF SHREVEPORT.

(GAS STATION STORY)

“NO DON, YOU HAVE IT ALL WRONG. IF I WAS MARRIED TO HIM, I WOULD STILL BE MARRIED TO A GENERAL, AND YOU WOULD BE PUMPING GAS.”

SO AT THE RISK OF THIS LOWLY AND POTENTIAL GAS STATION ATTENDANT SPEAKING TO SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GROUP, ALLOW ME TO OFFER THESE FEW THOUGHTS.

DURING MY MOST RECENT ASSIGNMENT TO US ARMY EUROPE, OUR CORPS OF ENGINEERS' DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL, GENERAL HANS VAN WINKLE, VISITED OUR SOLDIERS THERE. DURING HIS STOP IN KOSOVO, AT OUR LARGE BASE WE NAMED CAMP BONDSTEEL, GENERAL VAN WINKLE AND HIS AIDE WERE SPEAKING TO SOME OF THE LOCAL KOSOVARS.

HE ASKED ONE WHAT SHE THOUGHT OF CAMP BONDSTEEL. SHE REPLIED, “OH, WE DO NOT CALL IT CAMP BONDSTEEL, WE CALL IT “THE CITY OF HOPE.””

WELL IT IS A CITY OF HOPE NOT BECAUSE OF THE STRUCTURES WE BUILT THERE, IT IS A CITY OF HOPE BECAUSE OF THE FLAG THAT FLIES THERE. IT IS A CITY OF HOPE BECAUSE OF THE SOLDIER IN CAMOUFLAGED UNIFORM, WITH THE AMERICAN FLAG ON HIS RIGHT SHOULDER, AND CARRYING A WEAPON WITH WHICH HE PROTECTS AND DOES NOT THREATEN.

AND ISN'T THIS PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY FLOOD CONTROL ASSOCIATION SOMEWHAT SIMILAR? I CONSIDER IT “AMERICA'S PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE.”

IT'S A PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE BECAUSE OF WHAT WE DO FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE ENTIRE NATION. WE PRESERVE A WATERSHED THAT FEEDS THE NATION, FUELS THE NATION, AND PROVIDES FOR THE NATION. WE PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY WHO WORK FOR THE NATION.

WE PROVIDE RECREATION AREAS AND WE HELP DURING EMERGENCIES. WE ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN SECURING THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION. A PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE.

THIS HOPE WE BRING TO AMERICA IS REPRESENTED IN PART BY THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER AND TRIBUTARIES PROJECT – AND YOU ALL KNOW THE HISTORY OF THAT.

FOR THAT INVESTMENT OF \$11 BILLION DOLLARS SINCE 1928, THE MR&T PROJECT HAS PREVENTED AN ESTIMATED \$258 BILLION DOLLARS IN FLOOD DAMAGES.

BUT IT IS NOT THE MONEY OR THE STRUCTURES THAT'S IMPORTANT, IT'S THE DYNAMIC TEAM OF HARD WORKING, DEDICATED PEOPLE – THE MOST IMPORTANT OF WHICH ARE REPRESENTED RIGHT HERE IN THIS PARTNERSHIP.

WE NEED, HOWEVER, TO TAKE THIS A STEP FURTHER.

LET ME GIVE YOU A FEW EXAMPLES OF HOW WE ARE TRYING TO EXPAND THIS GREAT PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE.

TO HELP GUIDE THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI AND ILLINOIS WATERWAY SYSTEM NAVIGATION STUDY AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL, THE ROCK ISLAND DISTRICT ESTABLISHED A COUNTERPART TO THE FEDERAL PRINCIPLES TASK FORCE, THE REGIONAL INTERAGENCY WORK GROUP.

THIS GROUP OF FEDERAL AGENCIES WORKS DIRECTLY WITH MEMBERS OF THE PRODUCT DELIVERY TEAM.

OUR ST LOUIS DISTRICT HAS ESTABLISHED THE RIVER RESOURCES ACTION TEAM -- AN INTERAGENCY COOPERATIVE TEAM WHO'S MISSION IS TO PROMOTE COLLABORATION BETWEEN AGENCIES AND BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINES. THE 2002 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WAS SIGNED WITH THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, AND MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION.

THIS WORK IS NOT EASY, HOWEVER. IF YOU WERE TO ASK OUR DISTRICT COMMANDERS WHAT THESE EFFORTS ARE LIKE THEY WOULD PROBABLY TELL YOU IT IS LIKE HERDING CATS. THIS VIDEO CLIP MIGHT SUGGEST ONE POSSIBLE WAY.

(HERDING CATS VIDEO)

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A FURTHER EXAMPLE IS OUR MEMPHIS DISTRICT THAT HAS ESTABLISHED PARTNERSHIPS WITH LEVEE AND DRAINAGE DISTRICTS ALONG WITH RESOURCE AGENCIES SUCH AS ARKANSAS GAME AND FISH COMMISSION, MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION, AND MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

THE HURRICANE LILI FIGHT WAS A TEAM EFFORT OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AREA GOVERNMENTS, MANY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND, PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE PEOPLE OF LOUISIANA AND MISSISSIPPI REPRESENTED BY THEIR LEVEE DISTRICTS. AN AMERICAN PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE.

THE LIST GOES ON.

BUT THIS, TOO, IS NOT ENOUGH. I SEE IT AS JUST A BEGINNING. WE ARE IN DANGER OF LOSING GROUND TO MANY CRITICS. AND THAT IS THE PARADOX OF WHICH I SPOKE EARLIER – WE SEEK COALITION, OTHERS SEEK CONFLICT. WE WANT COOPERATION, OTHERS WANT CONFRONTATION.

I TRAVELED TO INDIA LAST MONTH AND A GREAT DEAL OF THE DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE POSSIBILITY OF WAR WITH PAKISTAN. AND, WOULDN'T YOU KNOW IT, THE MAJOR ISSUE IN THIS CONFLICT IS WATER. THE HEADWATERS OF THE INDUS RIVER ARE IN KASHMIR – AND THE INDUS FLOWS FROM THE INIDAN-CONTROLLED KASHMIR THROUGH PAKISTAN.

**BOTH COUNTRIES ARE READY TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THIS FIGHT OVER CONTROL OF THE INDUS HEADWATERS. IS IT POSSIBLE TO ARRIVE AT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION?
IT MAY BE, BUT IN SEEKING OR ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN INFLUENCE, AND THIS IS THE LESSON FOR US, THE RHETORIC OF CONFLICT SERVES A CERTAIN PURPOSE.**

AND ISN'T THAT WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES TODAY? A CONFLICT OVER THE USE OF WATER RESOURCES IN WHICH THERE ARE THOSE WHOSE MAIN WEAPON IS RHETORIC AND NOT SCIENCE? THE COURT OF PUBLIC OPINION AND NOT ENGINEERING?

SO HOW DO WE RESPOND? DO WE STRENGTHEN OUR DEFENSES? MAYBE – BUT I SAY THAT'S A WEAK APPROACH. BY DOING SO WE GIVE THE INITIATIVE TO OUR DETRACTORS.

IMPORTANT TO THE FUTURE OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER ARE BOTH THE STRENGTHENING OF THIS PARTNERSHIP RIGHT HERE AND THE FORGING OF NEW ONES.

RECENTLY, THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY BROKE NEW GROUND BY SIGNING A PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT WITH DUCKS UNLIMITED. NOW SOME MAY VIEW THIS WITH GREAT SKEPTICISM. I SUSPECT THAT THIS FOLLOWING VIDEO CLIP MAY BE A GOOD REPRESENTATION OF HOW A FEW MAY SEE THIS NEW PARTNERSHIP.

(“SHOOTING DUCKS” VIDEO)

NOW, I MAY BE NEW TO THE RIVER, BUT I AM NOT NAÏVE. TO BORROW WORDS FROM THE BIBLE, WE NEED TO BE SHREWD AS SNAKES BUT INNOCENT AS DOVES.

WE’RE LEFT, HOWEVER, WITH THE QUESTION – HOW DO WE SEIZE THE INITIATIVE?

WITH OUR EYES WIDE OPEN, WE MUST BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE WHO DO NOT WANT A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH US. AGAIN, THE PARADOX.

NOW, MOST OF YOU WILL REMEMBER ONE OF THE FAMOUS MANTRAS OF THE 1991 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN: “IT’S THE ECONOMY, STUPID.” WELL, WITHOUT BEING QUITE SO CRUDE, FOR OUR WORK ON THE RIVER I SAY, “IT’S ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS.”

AGAIN, I AM NOT ADVOCATING AN IMMATURE APPROACH. WE WILL NEVER PRODUCE A PANACEA. YOU WON’T SEE ALL STAKEHOLDERS SITTING AROUND THE CAMPFIRE HOLDING HANDS AND SINGING KUMBAYA.

CONSIDER THIS PARALLEL. WHAT I AM ADVOCATING IS SIMILAR TO WHAT PRESIDENT BUSH HAS CALLED FOR IN HIS NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY. THE PREVIOUS VERSION PUBLISHED IN 1992 CALLED FOR ENGAGEMENT AND ENLARGEMENT.

PRESIDENT BUSH CALLS FOR DEFENDING THE PEACE BY FIGHTING TERRORISM; FOR PRESERVING THE PEACE THROUGH BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS; AND EXTENDING THE PEACE THROUGH ACTIVE ENCOURAGEMENT OF DEMOCRACIES.

THE RELATIONSHIP STRATEGY WE NEED TO ADOPT IS MORE ANALOGOUS TO THIS NEW NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY. PRE-EMPTION, NOT ENGAGEMENT. IT IS ACTIVE PROMOTION OF OUR VALUES.

IN THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY DIVISION WE HAVE DEVELOPED A THREE PHASED STRATEGY FOR OUR STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS: ATTACK, ATTACK, AND ATTACK. NOT AS A BULLY, BUT AS A LEADER; NOT OVERPOWERING, BUT WORKING FROM WITHIN.

IT IS A STRATEGY OF ACTIVE INVESTMENT IN RELATIONSHIPS FOR WHAT WE KNOW IS THE GREATER GOOD – A SUSTAINABLE WATERSHED WITH AN EFFECTIVE BALANCE OF ECONOMIC, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND SOCIAL NEEDS.

WILL THIS SILENCE OUR CRITICS? NO. THE CORPS, IN PARTICULAR, WILL ALWAYS BE CRITICIZED FOR OUR DECISIONS. AND WHY? BECAUSE WE ACTUALLY HAVE TO MAKE THEM.

BUT WHAT WILL OUR CRITICS NOT BE ABLE TO DO WHEN WE TAKE THIS PARTNERSHIP APPROACH?

THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SUCCESSFULLY QUESTION OUR INTEGRITY – OUR WORK IS OPEN FOR ALL TO SEE.

THEY WILL NOT BE ABLE TO EFFECTIVELY QUESTION OUR PROCESS – THEY ARE INVITED TO BE A PART OF IT.

THEY WILL NOT PREVAIL IN COURT – WE USE THE BEST SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING.

WE WANT TO MAINTAIN THE MORAL HIGH GROUND.

WE HAVE A HUGE RESPONSIBILITY TO THE MORE THAN 28 MILLION PEOPLE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THE VALLEY, AS WELL AS ALL THE CITIZENS OF AMERICA THAT BENEFIT FROM WHAT IS PRODUCED AND PRESERVED IN THE VALLEY.

AND AS DISTASTEFUL AS IT MAY BE, WE MUST ACTIVELY ENGAGE OUR CRITICS. AND I BELIEVE THIS ASSOCIATION IS ABSOLUTELY THE KEY TO THIS EFFORT. THIS IS A SIGNIFICANT AND POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP WE HAVE HERE – AND WE NEED TO BE ON THE OFFENSE.

THIS WORK IS RESOURCE INTENSIVE AND THERE ARE MANY DIFFERING OPINIONS AND INTERESTS. AND, BY THE WAY, THERE ARE LIVES AND LIVLIHOODS AT STAKE. BUT THIS IS THE PARADOX WE MUST MASTER.

NOW IF THIS WERE EASY, GENERAL FLOWERS WOULD PROBABLY ASK ME TO CONTRACT IT OUT. BUT I SOMEHOW DOUBT THAT HE WILL DO THAT.

SO FOR NOW, I NEED YOUR HELP IN TWO WAYS:

FIRST, YOU KNOW BETTER THAN I THOSE WHO ARE KEY TO SHAPING OPINION. LET ME KNOW WHOM YOU THINK WE NEED TO ENGAGE. CALL, WRITE, OR EMAIL – WE NEED YOUR INPUT.

SECOND, WORK WITH US AS WE DEVELOP OUR STRATEGY BUT, MORE IMPORTANTLY, JOIN US IN THE ATTACK. DON'T SIT ON THE SIDELINES AND CHEER US ON. WE'RE ALL ON THE TEAM TOGETHER AND WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE ANY ONE SIT THIS OUT.

THIS IS AMERICA'S PARTNERSHIP OF HOPE. LET'S SEIZE THE DAY.

AGAIN, THIS HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTELY WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR ME. I GIVE MY THANKS TO THE HONORABLE MARION BERRY AND TO A PERSONAL HERO OF MINE, MR GEORGE GRUETT, FOR NOT ONLY THEIR LOVE OF THE RIVER, BUT FOR WHAT THEY HAVE SACRIFICED FOR ALL OF US.

AND LET ME CLOSE BY THANKING ALL OF YOU FOR WHAT YOU DO DAY-IN AND DAY-OUT FOR THE CITIZENS OF AMERICA. EVEN IN MY SHORT TIME WORKING WITH THE RIVER, I RECOGNIZE THE ENORMOUS DEDICATION OF THE MEMBERS AND PARTNERS OF THE MISSISSIPPI VALLEY FLOOD CONTROL ASSOCIATION AND YOUR SINCERE DESIRE TO DO WHAT IS BEST FOR OUR GREAT NATION.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL.