

Bush's SPP power grab sets stage for military to manage flu threats

U.S. under U.N. law in health emergency

By [Dr. Jerome Corsi](#)

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By Jerome R. Corsi

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The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America summit in Canada released a plan that establishes U.N. law along with regulations by the [World Trade Organization](#) and [World Health Organization](#) as supreme over U.S. law during a pandemic and sets the stage for militarizing the management of continental health emergencies.

The "[North American Plan for Avian & Pandemic Influenza](#)" was finalized at the SPP summit last week in Montebello, Quebec.

At the same time, the U.S. Northern Command, or NORTHCOM, has [created a webpage](#) dedicated to avian flu and has been [running exercises in preparation for the possible use of U.S. military forces in a continental domestic emergency](#) involving avian flu or pandemic influenza.

With virtually no media attention, in 2005 President Bush shifted U.S. policy on avian flu and pandemic influenza, placing the country under international guidelines not specifically determined by domestic agencies.

The policy shift was formalized Sept. 14, 2005, when Bush announced a new [International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza](#) to a High-Level Plenary Meeting of the U.N. General Assembly, in New York.

The new International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza was designed to supersede an earlier November 2005 [Homeland Security report](#) that called for a U.S. national strategy that would be coordinated by the Departments of Homeland Security, Health and Agriculture.

The 2005 plan, operative until Bush announced the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, directed the State Department to work with the WHO and U.N., but it does not mention that international health controls are to be considered controlling over

relevant U.S. statutes or authorities.

Under the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza, Bush agreed the U.S. would work through the U.N. system influenza coordinator to develop a continental emergency response plan operating through authorities under the WTO, [North American Free Trade Agreement](#) and the [U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization](#).

WND could find no evidence the Bush administration presented the Influenza Partnership plan to Congress for oversight or approval.

The SPP plan for avian and pandemic influenza announced at the Canadian summit last week embraces the international control principles Bush first announced to the U.N. in his 2005 International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza declaration.

The SPP plan gives primacy for avian and pandemic influenza management to plans developed by the WHO, WTO, U.N. and NAFTA directives – not decisions made by U.S. agencies.

The U.N.-WHO-WTO-NAFTA plan advanced by SPP features a prominent role for the U.N. system influenza coordinator as a central international director in the case of a North American avian flu or pandemic influenza outbreak.

In Sept. 2005, [Dr. David Nabarro was appointed the first U.N. system influenza coordinator](#), a position which also places him as a senior policy adviser to the U.N. director-general.

Nabarro joined the WHO in 1999 and was appointed WHO executive director of sustainable development and health environments in July 2002.

In a Sept. 29, 2005, [press conference at the U.N.](#), Nabarro made clear that his job was to prepare for the H5N1 virus, known as the avian flu.

Nabarro fueled the global fear that an epidemic was virtually inevitable.

In response to a question about the 1918-1919 flu pandemic that killed approximately 40 million people worldwide, Nabarro commented, “I am certain there will be another pandemic sometime.”

Nabarro stressed at the press conference that he saw as inevitable a worldwide pandemic influenza coming soon that would kill millions.

He quantified the deaths he expected as follows: “I’m not, at the moment at liberty to give you a prediction on numbers, but I just want to stress, that, let’s say, the range of deaths could be anything from 5 to 150 million.”

In a March 8, 2006, U.N. press conference that was [reported on a State Department website](#), Nabarro predicted an outbreak of the H5N1 virus would “reach the Americas within the next six to 12 months.”

On Feb. 1, 2006, [NORTHCOM hosted representatives of more than 40 international, federal and state agencies](#) for “an exercise designed to provoke discussion and determine what governmental actions, including military support, would be necessary in the event of an

influenza pandemic in the United States.”

NORTHCOM and other governmental websites document the growing role the Bush administration plans for the U.S. military to be involved in continental domestic emergencies involving health, including avian flu and pandemic influenza.

[NORTHCOM participated in a nationwide Joint Chiefs of Staff-directed exercise](#) – code-named Exercise Ardent Sentry 06 – to rehearse cooperation between Department of Defense and local, state and federal agencies, as well as the Canadian government.

A pandemic influenza crisis was one of the four scenarios gamed in Exercise Ardent Sentry 06, [involving a scenario of a plague in Mexico reaching across the border into Arizona and New Mexico](#).

As has been customary in SPP documents and declarations, the Montebello, Canada, announcement of the North American Plan for Avian & Pandemic Influenza acknowledges in passing the sovereignty of the three nations.

The announcement says, “The Plan is not intended to replace existing arrangements or agreements. As such, each country’s laws are to be respected and this Plan is to be subordinate and complementary to domestic response plans, existing arrangements and bilateral or multilateral agreements.”

Still, the SPP plan argues the risk from avian and pandemic influenza was so great to North America that the leaders of the three nations were compelled “to work collectively and with all levels of government, the private sector and among-non-governmental organizations to combat avian and pandemic influenza.”

Moreover, the SPP plan openly acknowledges, “The WHO’s international guidance formed much of the basis for the three countries’ planning for North American preparedness and response.”

[WND previously reported](#) NORTHCOM has been established with a command center at Peterson Air Force Base, tasked with [using the U.S. military in continental domestic emergency situations](#).

[WND also has reported](#) President Bush signed in May two documents, National Security Presidential Directive-51 and Homeland Security Presidential Directive-20, which give the office of the president extraordinary powers to declare national emergencies and to assume near-dictatorial powers.

Following the Montebello summit last week, the SPP North American Plan for Avian & Pandemic Influenza was published on a [made-over SPP homepage](#) redesigned to feature agreements newly reached by trilateral bureaucratic working groups.

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