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Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, stand in front of the vehicles they used in a combined-arms live-fire demonstration at Eugen Kvaternik Military Training Area in Slunj, Croatia, during the Defender-Europe 21 exercise. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. JOSHUA OH)

# Troops put on alert over Russia tensions

Up to 8,500 U.S. troops have been put on heightened alert as tensions continue to rise in Europe over fears of a Russian invasion of Ukraine.

If activated, the troops would support the NATO Response Force, Pentagon Spokesman John Kirby said Monday. The alert, directed by Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, allows for the units to prepare to move quickly if needed, Kirby said.

The NATO Response Force is a multinational force made up of land, air, maritime and special operations forces that the alliance can deploy quickly, wherever needed, according to the NATO website. The force

is about 40,000 strong, and the U.S. contributes to the force along with other NATO nations, Kirby said.

“We wanted to be ready in case the call would come,” he said, adding that America’s “commitment to the security of NATO allies” is “ironclad.”

Additionally, the U.S. military maintains “significant combat-capable forces forward in Europe to deter aggression and enhance the alliance’s ability to defend allies and defeat aggression, if necessary,” Kirby said.

The alerted troops are all based in the U.S., and they include brigade combat team, logistics, medical, aviation, transportation, intelligence,

surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, Kirby said.

No decisions have been made to deploy these troops, he said, adding that any decision to activate the NATO Response Force must be made by the alliance.

Kirby did not identify the units that were being put on alert because they were still being notified. In some cases, he said, the units were already on a heightened readiness posture, and Austin decided to “shorten the tether.”

“The idea is all of these units he is putting on ‘prepare to deploy’ will be ready to go on a shortened time-frame,” Kirby said.

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## AUSA cancels Global Force Symposium and Exposition

The Association of the U.S. Army has decided because of health and safety reasons and Defense Department travel limitations to cancel the 2022 Global Force Symposium and Exposition that was to be held at the end of March in Huntsville, Alabama.

“The continued spread of COVID-19 in the United States makes it impossible for AUSA to hold an in-person event that we are certain doesn’t pose a risk to attendees,” said retired Gen. Bob Brown, AUSA president and CEO. “We don’t like making this decision but know it is the right one for the Army, industry and members of the public who were planning to attend.”

He added, “We really wanted to have this important event focused on Army transformation and sustainment, but we don’t want to do this at any risk.”

AUSA is planning a March 2023 event in Huntsville.



Soldiers, defense contractors, AUSA members and more gather on the exhibit floor during the 2019 AUSA Global Force Symposium and Exposition. (AUSA PHOTO)

### Alert

From Page 1

The “bulk” of these troops are intended to support the NATO Response Force, but “the secretary wants us postured to be ready for any other contingencies as well,” Kirby said.

Tensions in Europe have soared in recent weeks over concerns that Moscow is planning to invade Ukraine, the Associated Press reported.

Russia, which has denied it is planning an invasion, has massed about 100,000 troops near Ukraine’s border, according to AP, and demanded, among other things, that NATO promise it will never allow Ukraine to join the alliance.

“We’ve been watching this very, very closely,” Kirby said. “It’s very clear the Russians have no intention right now of de-escalating.”

Instead, the Russians appear to be adding more force capability, Kirby said.

“They continue to add battalion tactical groups to ... the border with



A paratrooper with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, left, coordinates security on a drop zone with a paratrooper from the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade during Exercise Rapid Trident 21 near Yavoriv, Ukraine. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. JOHN YOUNTZ)

Ukraine, and in Belarus as well, the numbers are increasing,” he said.

In addition to supporting the NATO Response Force, the alert reassures America’s NATO allies, Kirby said.

“This is really about reassuring the eastern flank of NATO, and it’s proving how seriously the United States takes our commitment to

NATO,” he said.

At the same time, leaders continue to push for diplomacy and dialogue, Kirby said.

“We absolutely still believe that there’s time and space for that,” he said, adding, “We obviously don’t want to see another incursion in Ukraine.”

## McChrystal: Small-unit leaders on the front lines critical to future fight



Sgt. Jesus Quezada, a team leader assigned to the 29th Brigade Engineer Battalion, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, calls his team to move during exercises at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. (U.S. ARMY/STAFF SGT. ALAN BRUTUS)

**V**ictory in future battles may depend on difficult and risky decisions made by front-line small-unit commanders, retired Gen. Stanley McChrystal said Tuesday.

Traditionally, risky decisions take place at a level commensurate with the impact they would have on the larger entity, he said. But “we’re in a world now where we talk about the strategic corporal or things which happen at a much lower level having an outsize impact because of information technology,” said the former commander of U.S. and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

“Nowadays, we can’t be that sterile anymore,” McChrystal said during a virtual event hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army.

McChrystal spoke during the webinar, part of AUSA’s Noon Report series, about his latest book, *Risk: A User’s Guide*, noting that “the greatest risk to us is actually us and our own inability or unwillingness to do some of the things we need to do to be prepared.”

Pushing decisions down to the lower levels of an organization requires that the commander’s intent is paired with the necessary contextual understanding—or “shared

consciousness.” People need to make those decisions so “they understand far more about the big picture than they used to,” he said.

McChrystal, a 1976 West Point graduate, said that as new lieutenants, “we were told [to] point this way, worry about this, don’t worry about what’s on your left and right. The reality is nowadays we’ve got to push that down to lower level decision-makers, and they will make some mistakes, but in aggregate, we’ll get a better outcome because it’ll be closer to the point of action.”

In addition to commanding U.S. and coalition troops in Afghanistan, McChrystal also commanded the Joint Special Operations Command and served in Special Forces, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 82nd Airborne Division and the XVIII Airborne Corps.

After retiring from the Army in 2010, he founded the McChrystal Group, a leadership development firm. He is a senior fellow at Yale University’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs and the author of several books, including *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* and *Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World*.

# AUSA Extra

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Support For the Soldier

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### PERK OF THE WEEK



Genomic Life and AUSA have partnered to offer members and their families access to Cancer Guardian, a benefit program for the prevention and management of cancer. Services include hereditary risk screening tests, on-site nurse advocates, a cancer support line, financial navigation and more. Visit <https://www.enrollvb.com/ausa/>.



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# New book shares tale of secret WWII mission in Virginia

By Joseph Craig

Few people today would guess that the open spaces of Fort Hunt Park in Virginia, located on the banks of the Potomac River between the Pentagon and George Washington's Mount Vernon estate, held thousands of high-level German prisoners during the 1940s.

Robert Sutton, former chief historian of the National Park Service, is the author of the Association of the U.S. Army Book Program's new re-

**Book Program**

lease, *Nazis on the Potomac: The Top-Secret Intelligence*

*Operation that Helped Win World War II*. The book tells the story of the American soldiers posted at Fort Hunt, those German prisoners, and the clandestine programs that helped achieve victory in the war.

The AUSA Book Program recently sat down with Sutton to discuss his work.

\*\*\*\*\*

**AUSA:** What were some of the secret operations you cover in *Nazis on the Potomac*?

**Sutton:** Simply stated, everything was secret—interrogating and eavesdropping on German prisoners, translating and analyzing captured documents, and sending clandestine messages and packages to American airmen in POW camps.

The men at Fort Hunt expected to carry what they did there to the grave.

**AUSA:** How did you get connected to the story?

**Sutton:** I was appointed as the chief historian of the National Park Service in 2007 and had park staff travel throughout the country to capture the stories of Fort Hunt veterans before they were gone. After the oral history project was complete, I was concerned the story would be relegated to a shelf somewhere—that's when I decided to keep the story alive with this book.

**AUSA:** Would you share a favorite anecdote from the book?

**Sutton:** There are many, but my fa-

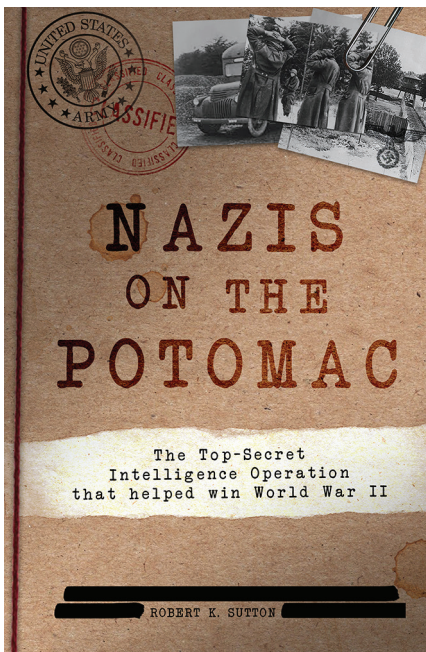


Fort Hunt, Virginia, during World War II. (NATIONAL PARK SERVICE PHOTO)

vorite is the story told by two soldiers who hitched a ride to Union Station and realized that Mamie Eisenhower was one of the women in the car.

They wrote her a thank you note, addressed to Gen. Eisenhower, who was then at the Pentagon. Several days later they received a letter from the general, thanking them for thanking Mrs. Eisenhower.

**AUSA:** What was the biggest contribution the Fort Hunt soldiers made to ending the war?



**Sutton:** I like to think that the effort of all of the programs at Fort Hunt cumulatively helped end the war.

If I had to pick one thing, it would be the *Order of Battle of the German Army*, which was known as the *Red Book*. It collected info on every German unit and was enormously helpful to the commanders as they planned for D-Day.

**AUSA:** What lessons can today's Army take from this history?

**Sutton:** By far the most important lesson, stated over and over from the veterans, was that the men at Fort Hunt never resorted to corporal punishment to get info. They found success through the soft approach, giving them good food, playing games with them, taking them to movies, etc.

If the Germans still wouldn't talk, they would threaten to send them to the Soviet Union—that always worked.

\*\*\*\*\*

To hear more about the secret programs at Fort Hunt, please check out AUSA's Thought Leaders podcast with Sutton at <https://podcast.ausa.org/>.

To order a copy of *Nazis on the Potomac*, visit [www.ausa.org/books](http://www.ausa.org/books).

**Joseph Craig** is AUSA's Book Program Director.

## Chapter members get update from AUSA vice president

Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Association of the U.S. Army has continued its efforts to help educate, inform and connect the nation with those who serve, retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey said.

Dailey, AUSA's vice president for NCO and Soldier Programs, was the guest speaker at a recent luncheon hosted by the association's Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter in Alabama.

AUSA operates a small staff at the national level, and its dedicated volunteers, consisting of veterans, military family members, community members and concerned citizens, help the association accomplish its mission, Dailey said.

"They comprise an organization made up of seven regions that span across the country and the globe," he said, according to the *Dothan Eagle*.

Individuals and businesses join AUSA as community partners or chapter sponsors to be a part of the oldest military service association and because they know that chapters take care of soldiers and their families, Dailey said.

The association serves active-duty soldiers, National Guard and Army Reserve troops and veterans, he said.

"We have the best Army in the world because we have the best soldiers in the world," Dailey said. "They have



Retired Sgt. Maj. of the Army Daniel Dailey, center, stands with Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter officers, from left to right, Mike Schmitz, vice president of membership; Mike Sutterfield, vice president of scholarships; Doug Wynn, chapter president; Otis Smith, vice president; Tanya Hatley, executive secretary; Mark Ivey, treasurer; and LeeAnn Capps, vice president of public relations. (AUSA PHOTO)

spent more time in combat than any previous generation in American history, and they have prevailed."

Those who join the Army volunteer for deployments around the globe to defend the freedom of all Americans, Dailey said.

"In many cases, they will reenlist to do it again and again and again ... [and] put their own lives on hold, and accept far less compensation working nights, weekends and holidays," he said.

During the pandemic, AUSA's national staff and its chapters around

the world fought for the nation's greatest resource—its soldiers, Dailey said. They conducted leader development sessions, helped the National Guard and Army Reserve with virtual drills, and advocated on Capitol Hill for critical issues that impact soldiers and military families.

At the national level, in addition to supporting its chapters and increasing membership, AUSA pledged \$2 million to the Army Emergency Relief fund to help families in need.

Dailey said he is proud to be part of an organization like AUSA that's dedicated to supporting the American soldier.

"Despite hard times, AUSA will be here for our Army, and, in fact, it's the hard times when the Army needs us the most," he said, according to the *Dothan Eagle*. "Thank you for sticking with us, thanks for riding out the storm with the Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter and thank you for helping row AUSA through the waves."

For information on how to join the Fort Rucker-Wiregrass chapter, go to [www.ausawiregrass.org](http://www.ausawiregrass.org).

### Fort Rucker-Wiregrass

AUSA as community partners or chapter sponsors

to be a part of the oldest military service association and because they know that chapters take care of soldiers and their families, Dailey said.

## Eagle Chapters

The following chapters attained Eagle status for December 2021 by showing positive membership growth. The number of consecutive months of growth since July 1, 2021, is shown in parentheses.

Central California (5)

Fort Rucker-Wiregrass (5)

MG John S. Lekson (5)

Japan (4)

Pikes Peak (4)

The Villages (4)

First Militia (3)

Puerto Rico (3)

Texas Capital Area (3)



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