

Admiral Thomas H. Collins
Remarks at the
San Diego Military Advisory Council Luncheon
Tuesday, 06 December 2005

Good afternoon!

It's terrific to be with all of you this afternoon. What a great place, San Diego! For me, it's like being back home. It wasn't too many years ago that I was the Coast Guard's Pacific Area Commander and San Diego was part of my AOR ... I always enjoyed it when my business brought me to the area. So, it is good to be back.

This is a military town ... a Navy town. Many in the audience here today are connected in one way or another to our Nation's sea services. So, it's very appropriate for me, in such a setting, to clarify the Coast Guard's evolving role as a naval partner with the Department of Defense.

That's my goal this afternoon.

Introduction

When most people think about the role of America's Coast Guard, they probably think of a lifesaving Service, especially in light of the performance of the Coast Guard during an event such as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Our Coast Guard's search and rescue capabilities are respected worldwide.

Moreover, it is an image most Americans have of the Coast Guard ... "America's Life Savers." It is an image that we cherish as an organization. But it's not a complete image. The value of our Coast Guard extends well beyond saving lives and responding to disasters. Though we will remain "Always Ready" to do that important work, our missions range from polar icebreaking to the interdiction of illegal drugs and migrants, and from aids to navigation to pollution response. But, what brings discipline, structure and responsive command and control to our many missions is our military character and national defense mission.

Our role in national defense has steadily evolved since our founding in 1790 ... we've fought alongside the Navy and Marines in every one of

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our Nation's conflicts ... that relationship is still evolving ... in many aspects and in transformational ways.

[PUT UP SLIDE ONE: CG CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL DEFENSE]

Of course, the radical shifts in our global security environment over the past decade -- particularly the events of 9/11 -- have been the catalyst for continuing adjustment to our relationships with the Department of Defense in general, and the Navy specifically.

Scene Setter

9/11, 2001 infused the Coast Guard/Navy partnership with a sense of urgency -- the need for a re-examination of our partnership. The world changed. As a maritime nation, 9/11 necessarily changed the way we look at our maritime borders and the threats that could violate them.

[PUT UP SLIDE TWO: MARITIME SECURITY OPERATIONS]

The spectrum of post-9/11 maritime threats our Nation faces today is complex and includes Human Smuggling and Slave Trade ... Drug Trafficking ... Arms and Monetary Smuggling ... Mining of Strategic Ports ... Surveillance Broadcasting ... Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive Threats ... Seaborne Piracy ... Critical Infrastructure Protection ... and the list of potential missions goes on and on.

In essence, a spectrum of potential conflict exists in the maritime ... from low-end law enforcement activities like fisheries protection ... through civil actions like search and rescue ... to high-end military operations like a show of force and maritime combat. The Coast Guard and the Navy work together along this spectrum of threats.

And, we are continuing to work closely with the Navy to evolve our post-9/11 partnership so that collectively we ensure the safety and security of the United States. For, today's threat environment requires the Nation's

sea-services to possess a level of flexibility and responsiveness to immediately transition from one end of the threat spectrum to another.

The CNO's Guidance underscores the need for a close and evolving Coast Guard – Navy relationship. The CNO and I have signed a National Fleet Policy Statement that commits us to collaborative planning, acquisition, maintenance and deployment of our respective fleets ... all in the Nation's interest ... to build complementary, non-redundant capability and capacity.

A coordinated Navy - Coast Guard partnership increases National capabilities, provides for greater coverage of our maritime borders, and gives us a greater capacity to respond to emerging threats. The concept of a National Fleet will help ensure that today's maritime operations are truly Joint, with a capital "J".

Transition to 3 – Point Main Message

Budget challenges along with shrinking fleet size and growing threats, demand that our Nation's sea-services leverage their unique capabilities and competencies, while pursuing increased interoperability and effectiveness. To that end, current operations reflect that requirement.

To illuminate this point, let me use a geographic construct. The Coast Guard and Navy are working more closely than ever in:

- (1) Out-of-Hemisphere Operations,
- (2) Western Hemisphere Operations, and
- (3) In CONUS Operations.

[PUT UP SLIDE THREE: OUT-OF-HEMISPHERE]

Out-of-Hemisphere

The Coast Guard supports DoD Out-of-Hemisphere operations in four critical areas:

- Maritime Interdiction Operations,
- Port Operations, Security, and Defense,
- Coastal Sea Control, and

- Theater Security Cooperation.

It is the Coast Guard's daily exercise of its special niche competencies and capabilities that bring dividends to Combatant Commanders overseas ... through overseas deployment of our major Cutters ... through port security and law enforcement teams ... and through deployment of mil-to-mil training and technical assist teams.

[PUT UP SLIDE FOUR: OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM]

For example, the Coast Guard skills in maritime interdiction and port security practiced in counter-drug missions and CONUS port security made us the force-of-choice during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Clearly, compared to the Navy we have a smaller expeditionary role, but our niche capabilities and competencies have been important to the overall mission success. At the peak of our participation we had embedded eleven ships and over 12 hundred Coast Guardsmen. And, though our presence is much reduced today, we continue to work to support and protect critical infrastructure, such as Iraqi oil platforms, and we're conducting anti-smuggling operations by sea, in and out of Iraq. We're also training Iraqi Naval forces so that they'll be able to assume these roles once we withdraw from the area.

It is just this type of security cooperation that supports national objectives and provides a unique instrument for Combatant Commanders to engage countries around the globe. The missions and responsibilities of many foreign navies are more like the United States Coast Guard than the Navy's. For instance, our humanitarian mission-set provides us greater entrée as many nations feel greater commonality with Coast Guard white-hulls than haze-gray Navy hulls.

This acceptance translates into repeated requests for training and assistance.

We now have Coast Guard officers assigned all over the world, including locations like Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Colombia, Ecuador, Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore and Yemen. In addition to training, technical assistance, bilateral and multilateral agreements, we have deployed major cutters to the Baltic, the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, the Black Sea,

Africa and elsewhere around the globe in response to Combatant Commanders' requests for support.

Our training and technical assistance programs provide significant returns in today's uncertain world. For instance, in Yemen, our Coast Guard "Maritime Advisor" just completed a three-year assignment. During his tour, he worked with the Ambassador, the Department Defense and other nations to provide Yemen the funds, skills, and equipment needed to organize a Yemen Coast Guard. The Yemen Coast Guard has grown from a staff of four in 2002 to an operational service of 1200 people today. An effective Yemeni Coast Guard is one of the best anti-terrorism investments we can make in that part of the world.

In addition, critical interoperability with Navy and coalition forces is practiced and honed during Out-of-Hemisphere deployments. Interoperability is more than having the same communications equipment. Establishing relationships are crucial to seamless operations in an urgent situation, wherever those situations occur. Furthermore, the skills gained in Out-of-Hemisphere deployments benefit Coast Guard and Navy operations in Homeland Defense and Security operations.

[PUT UP SLIDE FIVE: WESTERN HEMISPHERE]

Western Hemisphere

Our operations in the Caribbean region and the Eastern Pacific represent a winning model of successful cooperation and mission execution. Our role in counter narcotics and illegal migrant operations has proven effective over the past decade. The two key reasons are –

1. Cooperation with other nations, including many bilateral agreements, and,
2. Joint Interagency Task Force South that serves to optimize the domestic capabilities of the interagency and the international team.

The Coast Guard – DoD partnership has proven increasingly productive in this theater due to a joint focus on increased use of technology,

fused intelligence, and common doctrine and tactics. Our collective operations blend DoD's detection and monitoring capabilities with Coast Guard law enforcement authorities and capabilities to yield impressive results. Improved operations have netted the largest drug seizure rate in years. The Coast Guard and its DoD and inter-agency partners seized a record 299,579 pounds of cocaine in the maritime worth \$9.6 billion in FY05, shattering the previous record of 241,713 pounds set in FY04.

Similar to our experience in other parts of the world, the Coast Guard is often sought out to enhance Theater Security Cooperation. In the Caribbean and other parts of the Western Hemisphere, Coast Guard engagement in non-defense related operations accrue significant benefits in information sharing and cooperative operations that improve our Homeland Security. Clearly, Coast Guard engagement affords the regional Combatant Commander the dividends of increased international cooperation, regional stability and enhanced interoperability.

As we see, DoD and Coast Guard efforts far from America's shores offer clear advantages in those regions. But those same advantages also translate into improved security for the Homeland.

Which leads me to the third element of our geographic construct -- In-CONUS operations.

[PUT UP SLIDE SIX: OPS AROUND THE U.S.]

We are working diligently with both the Joint Staff, NORTHCOM and also the Navy to close homeland security and defense gaps.

In - CONUS

Immediately following 9/11, the United States lacked a unifying national strategy for maritime security. The federal government had a number of individual contingency plans, but lacked a coherent and comprehensive strategy. Overcoming this shortfall, President Bush recently approved the National Strategy for Maritime Security and eight subordinate plans dealing with various maritime requirements. DoD and the Coast Guard, with other inter-agency partners, are working closely to define implementation plans to effect the Strategy. These plans include fused

intelligence, enhancing Maritime Domain Awareness and improving threat response, to name a few.

DoD and the Coast Guard have taken tangible steps to improve and streamline operations including developing quicker command-and-control procedures, better intelligence collection and analysis, coordinated anti-terrorism operations, and consolidating command center functionality.

Here in San Diego, the Navy and the Coast Guard are conducting a technologically advanced and highly successful prototype that is enhancing domain awareness and joint/interagency collaboration. The Joint Command Center brings together previously unlinked federal, state and local sensor information for processing and analysis, and places watch standers from the various services and agencies in the same Operations Center to most effectively prosecute the full spectrum of missions. Our future success depends greatly on our ability to jointly collect and process information, and prosecute the anomalous target-of-interest. We are moving to replicate the successful San Diego model in other critical ports.

At the national level, our intell establishments are co-located in Suitland, Maryland where we jointly vet and analyze maritime threats and targets of interest.

The President's Maritime Strategy requires greater inter-agency and inter-service cooperation, not only in the detection of illicit activity, but also in its prosecution. To that end, the Coast Guard and DoD, and other agencies, are developing additional counter-terrorism capabilities to address potential incidents at sea. The goal is not to wait until an incident occurs in our ports, but to address it well off America's shores. We've also collaborated with NORTHCOM in developing a Homeland Defense maritime CONOP with supporting DHS –DoD MOA's that provide for timely TACON shifts of DHS and DoD assets so that they can effectively respond to national security threats to the homeland.

To improve detection and prosecution capabilities, the Navy and the Coast Guard are both undergoing much needed recapitalization efforts. The Coast Guard's major recapitalization effort is known as Deepwater. This major acquisition will replace obsolete surface and air fleets and put in place a networked system of Cutters, aircraft and sensors designed to operate in the post-9/11 environment. As part of the National Fleet, the future

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Deepwater System is critical to meeting growing threats in the maritime and to responding to potential incidents at sea. The Coast Guard and Navy are working closely to ensure their respective acquisitions are interoperable and benefit from integrated logistics support.

[PUT UP SLIDE SEVEN: KEY INGREDIENTS]

These are challenging times ... we have seen the globalization of the world's economy and the greater use of the maritime as a conduit for both good and evil.

Conclusion

The role and relevancy of a strong and coordinated sea services team has never been greater. And, the realities of our current fleet size and ship-building programs dictate an ever closer relationship between the Coast Guard and the Navy. The value of an effective National Fleet is made evident by successful operations undertaken around the globe. Whether conducting maritime combat operations Out-of-Hemisphere, leveraging respective capabilities and international cooperation in the Western Hemisphere, or streamlining command and control in defense of the Homeland, a complementary, non-redundant maritime force is not only possible, but necessary in today's uncertain environment. The Coast Guard and Navy are moving forward aggressively to better define and operationalize the National Fleet concept. This joint effort, along with other transformational initiatives, are critical to implementing the President's vision for achieving national security as stipulated in his Maritime Strategy.

I believe there are a number of key ingredients to continuing the progress we've made to date:

1. Network Centric compatible operations
2. Maritime Domain Awareness ... fused intell and COP
3. Operationalizing national homeland security plans
4. Maximizing joint doctrine and training
5. Leveraging communications systems and sub-systems

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We can retain and leverage our services' unique competencies while maximizing those efforts that increase operational effectiveness. Commonality of systems and of doctrine and training; improved intelligence and command and control; and, increased Maritime Domain Awareness can only serve to make America more secure.

I've enjoyed being with you today.

Thank you for having me.

I'll now take your questions.