

As Delivered

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Military Order of the Carabao  
“The Power of Transformation”  
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Thank you all very much for inviting me to be here with you today. It’s a real honor to be asked to speak to such a prestigious and historic organization as the Military Order of the Carabao.

Five months ago—even before he retired from active duty as our 21<sup>st</sup> Commandant—Admiral Jim Loy invited me to be your guest speaker today. That’s thinking ahead ... But then Admiral Loy has long been known for always being very well prepared ... a trademark of Jim’s ... It’s all about his favorite saying: “Preparation Equals Performance”.

And he has been true to that saying during the past five months. We have all witnessed that he has made the sometimes difficult transformation from active duty to retired status in fine stead, assuming the responsibilities of directing the security of our nation’s transportation systems.

Jim, I offer a special thanks for your continued service to our nation.

I’d like to speak to you today about another transformation, one that is clearly on the minds of most military members today—the transformation of our nation’s armed forces.

But before we get started talking about transformation, I’d like to wish the Marine Corps a belated Happy Birthday!

[Extemporaneous recognition of members of the Corps present.]

I thought I’d share with you an amusing little story that you probably won’t find in the history books.

Back in 1775, in Tun Tavern, the newly formed Marine Corps began its first recruiting drive. The very first enlistee came in, signed the necessary papers, and solemnly took the oath. He was then told to go outside and wait for the others to go through the same process. They would all assemble later on in front of the tavern.

After a few minutes, the second enlistee came out and had a seat on the steps, beside the first man. The first marine looked at the second for a moment, and then proudly said,

“Son, let me tell you about the Old Corps.”

Some things never change ...

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Speaking of taverns...I have no doubt that this august group knows very well that taverns have long been part of the history and tradition of the armed forces.

As I said...some things never change.

Like our nation's own "Star Spangled Banner," the tunes of many regimental marches were taken from old drinking songs, sung by many a trooper to celebrate life and victory during times of peace and war. As I understand it, however, standing while singing was always optional.

Take one of the most famous of these, for example. The well-known march of the Army's 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment is "Garry Owen," an Irish tavern song. One verse of the tavern song goes like this:

We are the boys who take delight  
In smashing Limerick lamps at night  
And through the street like sportsters fight,  
Tearing all before us.

Legend has it that General George Armstrong Custer overheard the song being sung by one of his troopers, soon after he took command at Fort Riley. He liked it so much that he began humming and whistling it to himself. Soon afterwards, the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry adopted it as their regimental march, and it has been associated with them ever since.

Over the years, new lyrics were written to fit the new purpose. The verse that I quoted earlier was rewritten like this:

We know no fear when stern duty  
Calls us far away from home,  
Our country's flag shall safely o'er us wave,  
No matter where we roam.

Quite a transformation, wouldn't you say? From rowdy tavern song to a rousing march intended to inspire men to courage in battle. That's the power of real transformation.

Transformation of that kind requires more than superficial change. It requires more than just changing the words of a song, for instance. It requires a complete rethinking of its use.

On a much more serious note, the transformation of the armed forces will require much more than superficial change, as well.

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LTGEN Hal Moore wrote a book called *We Were Soldiers Once...And Young*, about his experience in the Army as a Lieutenant Colonel in Vietnam, when he was chosen to lead 450 men into one of the earliest and fiercest battles of the war in November, 1965.

He was chosen because of his extensive knowledge of the strategy and tactics of a new type of air warfare, using helicopters to add a 110 mile-an-hour capability to ground warfare.

It was a transformation of modern warfare in the combined use of helicopters and ground troops to form an air assault infantry battalion. It is interesting to note that his battalion was given the honor of bearing the historic colors of the 7<sup>th</sup> U. S. Cavalry—the Garry Owen.

Seventy-nine of his men were killed and 121 wounded in a battle at Landing Zone X-Ray in the Ia Drang Valley. Against an opposing force of four times their number, his battalion held their ground, but at great cost and sacrifice.

Yet, they accomplished their goal, which was, in Hal Moore's words, "to create the absolute best air assault infantry battalion in the world, and the proudest."

That was 37 years ago. Many of their tactics are still in use today.

But this is a different day and age. The threats are different. The enemies are different. So must our armed forces be made different once again.

The President's National Security Strategy points out the urgent need for transformation in the military services. It says, in part:

"The major institutions of American national security were designed in a different era to meet different requirements. All of them must be transformed."

Let me stress that this imperative for transformation includes the Coast Guard. In the Coast Guard, we've talked about transformation before, and even planned carefully to achieve it. But we are now talking about transformation with a capital "T" .... Transformation with multiple dimensions and with large stakes hanging in the balance. This is **BIG**. And it needs to be done almost overnight.

Ten years ago, we in the Coast Guard had anticipated some of the changes that would be required to meet the challenges of the future. Out of that anticipation and subsequent deliberation came a document that expressed our vision of the future, called *Coast Guard 2020*. That document corresponds very closely to *Joint Vision 2020*.

It summarizes the challenges of the future this way:

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“More than ever, America will call upon the Coast Guard to protect lives and serve the national interests on the high seas, along the Nation’s maritime borders and coasts, and in the inland waterways. Mindful of these responsibilities, the Service has charted its course and embarked on an ambitious plan to renew assets and increase capabilities.”

We anticipated a gradual transformation that would occur over a decade or more, the end result of which would be a more capable Coast Guard, ready to provide the operational excellence that the nation needs and expects.

Our plans were well underway, when the new century began.

We were planning to re-capitalize our aging ships, boats, and aircraft through a groundbreaking approach to acquisition, known as “Deepwater,” which calls for a new integrated system of resources designed to meet specified capabilities, rather than a one-for-one exchange.

We were designing and implementing a new Integrated Logistics Support System, which links operational assets with their support lifelines.

We were building a new approach to human resources management, called “Future Force 21.” The system is designed to restructure our workforce to allow for greater specialization, to change the way we manage career entry and progression, and to deal with recruiting, retention, and force planning issues.

Our transformation promised to be a gradual one, planned and programmed well into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Then the future arrived on September 11, 2001.

That changed everything.

Suddenly, the Coast Guard was needed as never before in our history. The value and vulnerability of our ports, waterways, and coastal regions became clearly apparent in the wake of the terrorist attacks in the skies of our nation.

Under the very capable leadership of Jim Loy, our service responded valiantly to the sudden crisis by shifting its priorities overnight. We established new port security zones, sent sea marshals onboard inbound ships, and began patrolling along our coasts against the heightened threat of terrorism. Within just a few months, we stood up new Maritime Security and Safety Teams to provide maritime security to major ports.

These new services stretched our already thin resources nearly to the breaking point, and made it very difficult to continue serving other missions. Literally overnight, we activated nearly a quarter of our reserve forces to fill the gaps.

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Now, the President has directed us to take the lead in providing maritime security to our homeland.

He has asked Congress to establish a new Department of Homeland Security, in which the Coast Guard, with its maritime, multi-mission, military character, will play a central role.

He is directing major transformation of the military services to meet the demands of fighting the global war on terrorism, providing greater security to our homeland, and protecting the interests of the United States abroad.

I believe that the need for major transformation is no more pressing for any other service represented here today than it is for the United States Coast Guard.

Everything has changed in our world of work. It has happened virtually overnight.

All of these changes, both external and internal, present the need for very different capabilities and competencies.

We must change our internal organization and structure, not only to meet the increasing demands of maritime safety and security, but also to align more closely with other military services, and other agencies ... local, state, and federal.

We must change our relationships. Very soon, the Coast Guard will be required to transfer to a new department of the President's Cabinet. That presents the promise of a significant cultural transformation.

We must change how we allocate resources. Fortunately and appropriately, our budget has grown at an unprecedented rate of 20 per cent this year to help meet the growing demands on our services. That's going to require an increasing emphasis on good stewardship, both to satisfy competing interests on our scarce resources and to execute effectively.

We must change how we spend our time and effort. The increase in operations directed towards homeland security has not at all lessened the demands for our other missions. The necessity of rebalancing our mission portfolio is clear, but the way to do it is not.

We must quicken the pace of our efforts to modernize our ships, boats, and aircraft, as well as the C4ISR systems that link them. The need for our Integrated Deepwater System has been important for quite some time. It is now urgent.

We must change how we how we manage information ... how we develop and share intelligence, both internally and externally. That's why I have appointed a new

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Assistant Commandant for Intelligence, and reshaped our intelligence program to meet our growing needs.

We must continue making the necessary changes to the management of our human resources systems. The workforce of the future will require greater emphasis on specialization and broader diversity at every level. And they will need a different range of core competencies and capabilities.

Finally, we must change the strategy and tactics of force deployment to provide the capability for preemptive measures, rather than waiting to respond to the next catastrophe.

In September, President Bush announced a new element of our national security strategy, based on a doctrine of pre-empting the new threats to our national security, rather than relying exclusively on the Cold War-era doctrines of containment and deterrence.

The doctrine of pre-emption has been hailed as unprecedented in modern world affairs. While not really a new notion, what makes it unprecedented is that pre-emption has now been made a central tenet to our nation's policy of military intervention.

The strategy says, in part:

“Given the goals of rogue states and terrorists, the United States can no longer solely rely on a reactive posture as we have in the past.”

The President is absolutely right.

What is necessary to our national security is also necessary to our homeland security. We can no longer afford to rely on a reactive posture to prevent future terrorist attacks on our homeland. We must act first to prevent harm to our people.

The President also recently unveiled the National Homeland Security Strategy, which outlines plans to accomplish three broad objectives: to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States; to reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism; and to minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur.

It is a sound strategy that depends primarily on preventing future attacks—or preempting them, if you will—by sharing information, securing our borders, protecting vital infrastructure, partnering with others at home and abroad, and preparing to respond quickly if necessary.

It is a strategy that requires transformation, with a capital “T.”

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The time is past to talk about the “Old Corps.” Rather, the time is at hand to bring the kind of broad transformation that is necessary to provide the strength and security that our nation deserves.

It is a kind of transformation that must occur without changing the nature of who we are, however. Amidst all the needed changes that I’ve mentioned, the Coast Guard will not change its essential character. We will remain a maritime, multi-mission, military service. And when we move to Homeland Security we will do so with all our missions intact.

Some things must never change.

The kind of transformation we are seeking is a process that is both evolutionary and revolutionary. But it is not an end in itself.

It is the means to an end. That end is operational excellence and performance...excellence and performance that will remain unmatched and unsurpassed among the nations of the world... excellence and performance to ensure the safety and security of the public we so proudly serve.

That’s the power of transformation.

Thank you very much.