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**"A Unique Instrument of National Security"**

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**Amenities:**

Thank you, Dean Calhoun.

I'm honored to be here with the students, staff, and faculty of the Naval War College.

I'm also glad to see that some Coast Guard personnel have come out from the First Coast Guard District and from Group Woods Hole units, the Naval Justice School, and the Naval Academy Prep School. Good afternoon.

**Introduction:**

One of the challenges of senior leadership is properly managing two categories of priorities. Some priorities are thrust upon you, either by situations you inherit or by forces beyond your control; other issues become priorities because you consciously choose to elevate them to re-direct the organization you lead or otherwise to prepare it for the future. All leaders must competently attend to the first category of priorities—overcoming what has aptly been termed the tyranny of the urgent—while still reserving sufficient energy to pursue the priorities that will matter to the future success of your organization.

If you were to ask me to name the two most immediately pressing organizational issues facing the Coast Guard for the coming year, I would say, with very little hesitation, "recruiting and Y2K." Notice that both of these issues fall into that first category of priorities. I didn't choose them. They chose me. Neither of these priorities is connected with the Coast Guard's service to America other than by the thread that we cannot accomplish our missions unless we grapple with these problems effectively. The taxpayers don't support the Coast Guard out of an explicit common desire for us to recruit well or deal with Y2K, but we must do those things in order to deliver the goods that the taxpayers do expect. Thus, the consequences of not dealing with these issues are so serious that they have to be—as indeed they are—immediate priorities.

However, I could not look back with much satisfaction if, at the end of my tenure as Commandant, the list of our accomplishments was headed by invigorating recruiting and managing Y2K. Dealing with these priorities is necessary but not sufficient for organizational success.

Organizational success depends on our maintaining operational capabilities, yes, but also on our seizing the opportunities that the times present and on preparing for the missions that we know we will face in the years after my tenure.

Thus, as I engage these two priorities that have been thrust upon us, I keep a weather eye out for opportunities to advance the short list of priorities that I did choose.

I am grateful to the Naval War College for affording me one of those opportunities today by allowing me to address officers from the Navy and the Marine Corps, from the Army and the Air Force, and of course, from the world's very best Coast Guard.

My purpose today is to discuss one of my chosen priorities, namely, the personal charge I laid upon myself to communicate to the defense and foreign policy communities the Coast Guard's capability to serve—and to serve more widely—as a unique instrument of national security.

I have sought opportunities to address the senior service schools from all of our armed services because I want the officers who are moving into important commands and into key leadership positions on joint and service staffs to understand the national security value that the Coast Guard offers.

### **Acknowledge Low Awareness of Coast Guard's National Security Role:**

I readily acknowledge that the notion of the Coast Guard as a Unique Instrument of National Security does not immediately spring to mind when most people contemplate the panorama of national security issues.

Most Americans are aware of our Search and Rescue and Maritime Law Enforcement missions. Many are also aware of our work in aids to navigation, oil pollution prevention and response, boating safety, and protection of natural resources like fisheries. Few people, though, even among the ranks of professional military officers, thoroughly understand the Coast Guard's contributions to national security.

However it is here at the Naval War College and other senior service schools that professional military officers form their comprehension of our national security strategy, including an understanding of where the Coast Guard fits into the big picture. That strategy has very different dimensions in 1999 than it did in 1989.

### **Common Erroneous Views of Coast Guard's National Security Role:**

Where there is an awareness of the Coast Guard's national security role, there is often misunderstanding as to what that role is. For example, because it is fairly well known that the Coast Guard is fully employed carrying out its broad array of peacetime missions, there is a perception that our national security role is more or less an afterthought to those better known missions.

I have also encountered the views that the Coast Guard is really a part of the Navy and that our military role is limited to the statutory provision for us to operate under the Department of the Navy in time of war.

Neither of these characterizations is accurate.

It is true that we have a full plate of peace time missions. In fact, even though our missions have steadily grown in size, number, and complexity, we recently completed a round of streamlining that left us smaller than we've been in thirty years. Sounds familiar to everyone in this audience. Because of these cuts, our military responsibilities, our military organization, our military outlook are even more essential to the character of today's Coast Guard. The discipline they offer enables us to conduct our multi-mission operations efficiently and effectively.

It is also true that the Coast Guard has often served alongside, and during World War I and II, under the Navy. We are very proud of our record of combat service in every war this nation has fought. We are proud of our antisubmarine convoy escort duty and landing craft crews in World War II. We're proud of our patrol boats in Operation Market Time in Vietnam. We're proud of the work we've done in more recent joint operations from Haiti to the Persian Gulf. And we're proud of our leadership roles in Joint Task Forces in the Atlantic and the Pacific.

As we cooperate—virtually every day at almost every level—we remain distinct from the Navy. And in that distinctness lies the Coast Guard's value as a unique instrument of national security.

### **Unique Instrument for Responding to Emerging Maritime Security Threats:**

The Office of Naval Intelligence published a booklet last year that sets forth a list of maritime challenges facing America: the smuggling of drugs, aliens, technologies, and untaxed cargoes . . . destabilizing arms trafficking . . . violations and circumvention of environmental protection laws . . . challenges to our critical infrastructure base . . . attempts to violate economic sanctions . . . piracy, terrorism . . . uncontrolled mass migration . . . depletion of fish and other resources in our Exclusive Economic Zone.

A similar list of issues is featured prominently in the President's *National Security Strategy for a New Century*, which the White House published less than two months ago: Environmental initiatives . . . International law enforcement cooperation . . . Terrorism . . . International crime . . . Drug trafficking . . . Protecting critical infrastructures.

Think about these lists. All of these issues are associated with serious threats. All of the threats are present today, not hypothetical. All of them are growing. Separately and collectively they pose dangers to our borders, our economy, our environment, and our safety. How does America protect itself against these threats?

These threats are conveyed towards our shores in ways that are not effectively countered by traditional naval forces. We can't launch cruise missiles or air strikes against them:

they draw near in civilian vessels that look like and mingle with legitimate commercial and recreational traffic.

They can't be blown up from over the horizon. Somebody has to engage these vessels one at a time up close. Somebody has to distinguish the suspicious from the obviously innocent. To separate the guilty from the merely suspicious, somebody has to get alongside and put a boarding team aboard, even if the suspect vessels won't stop. Once aboard, somebody has to exercise sound judgment and sometimes physical force to maintain the safety of the boarding teams and the crews of the vessels boarded. Somebody has to size up each case and dispose of it based on the complex humanitarian, diplomatic, military, geo-political, environmental, and legal issues at stake.

Somebody has to coordinate proposed enforcement actions with other government departments, flag states, law enforcement agencies, and everybody else who has a legitimate voice in the matter. Who is that somebody?

That somebody is the United States Coast Guard.

Effective protection against these national security threats demands maritime, military, multi-mission expertise that only the Coast Guard can provide. Since 1790, the Coast Guard has been the nation's expert in identifying suspicious vessels, intercepting them, boarding them, and sorting out the legitimate from the illegal . . . the safe from the hazardous . . . the friendly from the hostile—all according to the rule of law.

These are Coast Guard missions. And that's the primary reason the Coast Guard is a unique instrument of national security today and will only grow in that role as we enter the next century.

The threats are real and growing. They each have a maritime dimension. They are best combated by the combination of military discipline and law enforcement authority that comes together only in the Coast Guard.

### **Unique Instrument for Promoting Stability:**

But there are other categories of Coast Guard uniqueness. The list of maritime security threats I mentioned a few moments ago is a symptom of a larger worldwide reality. When you add that inventory to an equally long list of non-maritime security threats, it doesn't take long to make a convincing case that the world is actually far less stable today than it was ten years ago before the Soviet Union collapsed: the recent nuclear tests in India and Pakistan, the eagerness of rogue states like Iraq to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the willingness of other states like Iran and North Korea to export medium-range missile technology, the uncertain disposal of the former Soviet Union's arsenal. The threat may not be as focused as it was in the Cold War, but the world is perhaps even a more dangerous place today.

In this unstable world, the Coast Guard offers other evidence of its status as a unique instrument of national security. The President's National Security Strategy of

international engagement and enlargement is a positive force in promoting stability throughout the world.

There are two ideas at work behind the Coast Guard's contribution to international engagement. The first is that if we can help other nations establish the competence to exercise their sovereignty in the maritime environment, they will help increase stability in their regions. Many of the security threats we've discussed do not arise from hostile nations, but from uncontrolled criminal enterprises. Thus, every nation that develops the will and the means to impose the rule of law over its territorial sea will make our own security challenges a little easier to manage.

For this reason, the Coast Guard has an active program aimed at helping other countries develop maritime organizations modeled on the U.S. Coast Guard. Through equipment transfers, training visits, joint exercises, bilateral agreements, and opportunities to train at our service schools, we are helping friendly countries to become positive forces for peace and stability. This is particularly apparent in the Caribbean region, but we have programs all over the world from Baltic states to Africa.

The second idea is that nations who choose to develop their maritime competence on the model of the Coast Guard usually choose not to develop offensive naval forces that could promote regional instability at some point down the road. Few nations have the resources to have both a Navy and a Coast Guard. Further, nations with Coast Guard-like maritime organizations find that they have greater flexibility in exercising sovereignty over their maritime affairs.

So, promoting stability in the world's maritime environment is a valuable second reason why the Coast Guard is a unique instrument of national security.

### **Unique Instrument for Supporting the CINC's**

A third reason is our support of CINC strategies and operations. The Coast Guard has statutory authority to assist the Department of Defense in the performance of any activity for which the Coast Guard is especially qualified.

#### **CINC Engagement.**

There is a Memorandum of Agreement between the DOD and DOT that specifically calls on the Coast Guard to participate in CINC engagement strategies. We deploy major cutters to the Baltic, the Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, the Black Sea, and other spots throughout the globe in response to CINC requests for support of their engagement plans.

Often we can gain access to nations and ports where a more overt U.S. military presence would not be welcome. There are a lot of places in this world where the arrival of gray-hulled American ships would either not be permitted or would create anxiety and resentment. Many of these same places welcome Coast Guard cutters with open arms. We are an armed service of the United States, but our legal authority as a law enforcement and regulatory agency combines with our international reputation as a humanitarian service to create engagement opportunities.

These peacetime missions offer CINC's and ambassadors extensive contacts and opportunities. How often do the other U.S Armed Services communicate with the Russian and Cuban Border Guards? We do it every day.

### CINC Operations.

Beyond peacetime engagement, the Coast Guard also provides unique support for CINC operations.

Desert Shield/Desert Storm revealed Coast Guard contributions to port security and logistics flow. In theater, Coast Guard Port Security Units, consisting mostly of Coast Guard Reserve personnel, set up Harbor Defense Commands where materiel was being delivered. Stateside, we balanced the urgency of loading and moving MARAD and Sealift Command ships against the necessity of maintaining an orderly flow of routine commerce. The Coast Guard provided crucial support at both ends of the logistics pipeline. After Desert Storm, our boarding and inspection expertise have remained available to enforce the UN embargo.

We provide similar exercise support to U.S. Forces Korea: offshore, a high endurance cutter and a patrol boat control approaches to ports of debarkation; inshore, a Port Security Unit performs port security and harbor defense command functions.

Sometimes CINC's use our engagement advantage and our operational capabilities simultaneously. For example, the acceptability of a more benign Coast Guard presence is one of the reasons that a Coast Guard vessel was chosen as the lead U.S. ship entering Port Au Prince in Operation Uphold Democracy. Without a Coast Guard cutter at the head of the line, the operation would have looked a lot like a hostile invasion and been received as such. However, having a Coast Guard cutter at the head of the line alleviated anxiety among the Haitian populace well accustomed to Coast Guard port calls while giving the operational commander the immediate capability to mark the channel and set up the Harbor Defense Command.

In a wider sense, CINC's abilities to capitalize on using the Coast Guard as a model maritime service for emerging naval services has proven valuable from Albania to Haiti.

Thus, the Coast Guard is uniquely prepared to respond to the new array of maritime security threats, uniquely able to promote stability by encouraging other nations to pursue responsible maritime policies and build maritime services modeled after the services we provide for America, and uniquely able to support the operational objectives of CINC's. The Coast Guard has a lot to offer in joint operations. Based on the services we have been able to deliver and meetings I've had in the last weeks with General Clark, General Zinni, and General Wilhelm, I think that support of CINC's is a growth industry for us.

### **A Unique Instrument for Complementing the U.S. Navy (National Fleet)**

Finally, the Coast Guard is a unique instrument for complementing the U.S. Navy.

*Joint Vision 2010* predicts a more unpredictable and less stable era in which the bulk of our maritime security activities will be concentrated at the low end of the spectrum of conflict. In this environment, the Coast Guard and Navy will have to deploy forces with greater flexibility, adaptability and affordability.

Accordingly, Admiral Johnson and I signed a policy statement in September that establishes the concept of the National Fleet. Under this concept, both services will maintain their distinctive heritages, capabilities, and identities; but we will make sure that our strengths are complementary.

The Navy will of course maintain its the highly capable multi-mission surface combatants designed for the full spectrum of naval operations from Peacetime Engagement through Major Theater War. The Coast Guard will provide relatively smaller maritime security cutters, designed for peacetime and crisis-response Coast Guard missions but capable of meeting the requirement for general-purpose, shallow-draft warships.

But "National Fleet" isn't an inventory of who will procure which assets. It is a process for closer cooperation to synchronize planning, training and procurement to provide the highest level of maritime capabilities for the nation's investment. It is a way for both services to support national security objectives and our stewardship responsibilities. It is a way to ensure inter-operability and to avoid redundancy.

### **Deepwater:**

Understanding these Coast Guard roles, you can well understand that one of my most pressing obligations is to preserve our ability to perform them. They are vital national security functions that bode greater impact in the future.

Frankly, this matter is of grave concern to me. We are well on the way to modernizing our aids to navigation fleet and our patrol boats. However, our ships and aircraft that operate further offshore are among the oldest of all the world's fleets of similar platforms—37<sup>th</sup> of 41. The personnel and maintenance costs of keeping these ancient craft running grow increasingly prohibitive. The operational consequences of inadequate sensor and data systems are ever more painfully obvious. We must replace our larger ships and aircraft soon and intelligently if we are to remain effective as a unique instrument of national security. It will be the same set of competencies and capabilities that enable us to do our more familiar missions as well.

That's why one of my chosen priorities is to pursue an acquisition project called the Integrated Deepwater System (IDS). We call it Deepwater because it will provide the ships and aircraft and C4ISR that operate beyond the coastal environment that most people associate with the Coast Guard.

Deepwater is not your standard government acquisition project.

Instead of a piece-meal, one-for-one replacement of antiquated ships and aircraft, IDS began with a solid analysis of the maritime environment of 2020 and the mission

requirements that will define the Coast Guard of that day. Then we carefully articulated the capabilities we will need to perform the missions we will face.

Instead of making penny-wise and pound-foolish design decisions based only on initial purchase price, IDS decisions will be based on the total ownership costs: acquisition, maintenance, operating, crewing, training, and eventual disposal.

Instead of making our decisions without regard to maritime capabilities that the government already has, we will pursue IDS within the parameters of the National Fleet concept.

We don't need the Deepwater capability to try to become the second best Navy in the world. We need the Deepwater capability to remain the single best Coast Guard in the world.

Deepwater is what we are doing today to ensure our ability to support joint operations, to serve the American public with our traditional missions, and to remain a unique instrument of national security for the next generation. It is the heart of our strategic planning and our quest to remain Semper Paratus.

**Conclusion:**

I've spoken on National Security this afternoon and will happily entertain your questions on that subject. But I am also eager to respond to your questions on leadership, my direction for the Coast Guard, or other topics relevant to your studies.

