

**Chief of Naval Operations
Adm. Jonathan Greenert**

Remarks at National Geospatial Agency

October 9, 2013

It's an honor and a privilege to be here. Admiral Brown, thank you for your hospitality. I appreciate it much. As the Chaplain said, he really captured it- it's really remarkable to be here at DOD command and you are all joined together to celebrate one of the service's birthdays. I think it's extraordinary and it says a couple of things. One is the fact that we have this maritime service that's important to all of us, but more importantly we're a joint force. We're not just military, there's a military and civilian coming together there's a lot of what I call our civilian shipmates out there I thank you all for coming here today to do this. Now you folks out there in the West Campus, I need to say something, I see there's some red blazers on there, out there- I'm sorry but there's a birthday celebration and I'm all for that, but I'm from the Pittsburg area. Beat 'em bucks. It's an important night for us tonight, it doesn't happen but every couple of decades, but it's an important night. You are definitely a noble folk. As Director Long said, we've got this shutdown, and it's nagging, right? And it's more than that to some. But that doesn't stop us from taking the time to remember our roots, remembering what we're all about. Especially those of us that wear the blue, the cloth of the nation. Many of you wear a different color cloth of our nation, but we're all here representing our nation. And I think it's remarkable this will be, in fact it will be the largest event where we gather folks this week to celebrate the Navy birthday. At least that I will be at here in the Washington, D.C. area. We'll have a ball, and I mean that literally, and we're going to have a ball at the ball. On Saturday night, I'll see some of you there and it's growing and burgeoning thing that we're really proud of. The marines will have a birthday in about a month and I say to you, "hoo-rah!" and we'll see you all in about a month. As I mentioned before this shutdown, we're going to get by that. I'm very happy to see a lot our civilian shipmates back at work, making things happen in our Navy, where it matters, so we can be ready to go when it matters, to continue to operate. That situation is well in hand, as the marines like to say, and that situation is where we need to be today, we'll continue to do that. Those that need to get underway shortly will replace those that are out there underway today. They're funded, they're training, this will be put together well. We'll work through commissaries, travel and all of that.

Director Long opened with a little story about the beginning of the Navy, the fact of the matter is we have a second birthday, or second kind of resurgence in the war of 1812. 201 years ago. But the uniform that we wear, the things we say, the traditions that we have really took root in the war of 1812. If you think through the tenets, the tenets I established when I took the watch over two years ago, Warfighting First, Operate Forward and Be Ready. We didn't think our Navy at that time, in the War of 1812, right in the 1790-1800 time frame. We didn't think much about warfighting. We were not forward, we were in port and we were not ready. So what happened?

So the British came over and they impressed a lot of our Sailors. And that doesn't mean they said, "Wow these are great sailors!" That means they took them, they took our Sailors onboard. They raided the United States. We were losing, in today's value if you take inflation; we were losing tens of billions of dollars. A month, in trade. And we couldn't do anything about it. We had no options for the President of the United States. And he actually had to state, "I have no options, I'm going to have to go to war. I have to put it all on the table because what should be a relatively minor skirmish," cause remember the British were very busy fighting the French in those days. So we had to put it all on the table. But you know what happened? We had great leaders, we had bold accountable leaders, we had the good technology in those days, those six frigates, there's a book called Six Frigates, go figure. Very good book. If you want to know about the start of the Navy, if you want to know how all this came about, those were good six frigates. Those people took our kids, our sailors back then, and they practiced again and again. On ships like Old Ironsides, right? The USS Constitution, made of good material, literally had cannon balls bounce off it. Our folks were good at getting those canons working. And so what we found is that crews that were proficient in what they did and confident in what they were doing, just like you all today. More successful. So we weren't a big Navy, but we were lethal. We had people who were confident at what we do and they were confident. They were bold and we wore them out. We won those skirmishes. Now this year we look back and it's about two hundred years and it's the battle of Lake Erie, where Oliver Hazard Perry won the Battle of Lake Erie and you say, what's that about? What that's about, is that's where the British were stopped, that's what turned the tide in a maritime sense, at Lake Erie of the war otherwise they were sweeping into the Great Lakes and it wasn't going to be a very good outcome. And that involved a lot of long range involvement. And it involved a lot of proficient Sailors working innovatively and preserving. So those similar attributes of those Sailors past and the same attributes true of our today. We found out that if you don't operate forward, you think you're just going to react, that's not going to work, that's not a good strategy. So our Navy has to operate forward. You've got to think about Warfighting First, I believe. That's the lens you've got to see everything through. And you've got be ready. That's the essence of the tenets that's going to carry me and carry us forward in the Navy as we move ahead. So those out and around out in our Navy today, they carry that kind of tradition, that is what we embed in them.

Those of you in other services, I know you've got terrific heritage, and you should be proud of that. I urge you to when your birthday comes around, or any time learn what you're about what is the essence, who you are, what is your ethos, and what you're about. As Director Long mentioned this institution and our Navy is an indispensable partnership. It's the foundation of how we get around and safe navigation. So we completely depend on it and we are indebted to NGA. So I'm proud to be a partner with the NGA folks. You are key Intel for our war fighters and you make sure that we can be forward, where it matters, when it matters. So thank you so much for serving, for being a partner, for being the greatest joint force this world has ever known, and I thank your families for making you who you are. I thank our civilian shipmates, our partners out there, because you're the foundation of the service I represent. You're the

genesis of sea power, it starts in places like this and it starts in places like the Naval Sea Systems Command at the Navy Yard. Folks who are recovering they are the key to us. So when you lay your head on the pillow tonight say a little prayer for them out there as they recover. Happy birthday to all of you thank you for joining me and my shipmates here today and out there as we commemorate this birthday.

Thank you.