

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
Deployment of the Great Green Fleet
Naval Air Station North Island
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Thank you all so much, and thank you for being here.

Admiral Shoemaker, thank you for that wonderful introduction. And Congresswoman Susan Davis, Congressman Scott Peters, and my close friend, former governor and collaborator in this effort for the last almost seven years, Tom Vilsack.

There are so many people in the audience who have made this thing possible that I'm not going to go down the list. But there is one person here who you've been introduced to, Admiral and former commander of the Third Fleet Dennis McGinn, who's now Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment. His predecessor in that job, Jackie Pfannenstiel, is sitting here, too. It was under her leadership that this began, and Admiral McGinn has carried it forward to great success.

So this may be the most formal ceremony I've ever attended to celebrate everyday operations. That's exactly the point. We're just deploying the Great Green Fleet. The Stockdale, the ship you see behind me, the Stennis, that left a few minutes ago, and those that deploy with her don't look any different from any other carrier strike group. Later this morning, everybody was going to fly out to another destroyer to watch an underway replenishment using an alternative fuel blend. That will look no different than a normal UNREPs. This deploying strike group, these are routine operations, and exactly what the nation counts on the Navy and Marine Corps to do.

Secretary of State John Kerry said last week in his address to the National Defense University the United States will remain more engaged in more places in the world than at any other time in history. The Navy and Marine Corps, uniquely, provide presence around the world, around the clock, ensuring stability, deterring adversaries, giving our leaders options in times of crisis. As Admiral Shoemaker said, the Navy and Marine Corps are America's away team. We don't get any home games. We're not just in the right place at the right time, we're in the right place all the time. We get on station faster, we stay there longer, we bring everything we need with us. And, because we're operating from sovereign American territory – our ships – we don't have to ask anybody's permission to get the job done.

Now, back in cold, snowy Washington, the word's "posture versus presence." There's a debate bandied about as if it's a choice, that you've got to choose between the two. But for the Navy, the Navy and Marine Corps, our posture is presence. That's what we do.

When Theodore Roosevelt sent the Great White Fleet around the world 110 years ago, he did it as a show of the Navy's strength and our ability to project that strength, to be present. He understood how important it was for the rest of the world to see the U.S. Navy paving the way forward for our country. And he did it without enough money to bring the fleet home. He was confident that Congress would appropriate the money, once it got halfway around, to bring it back – (laughter) – and they did.

As President Obama discussed in his State of the Union last week, the American way is to blaze a trail. When another president, John Kennedy, announced in 1961 that we would go to the Moon and back within a decade, a lot of the technology required hadn't even been invented. We have never been a nation to shy away from bold ambition.

And with that thought in mind, in 2009, as you've heard, I set some pretty aggressive energy goals for the Department of the Navy. So I want to talk today a little bit more than just about the Great Green Fleet. I want to talk about the journey we've traveled these past seven years, and more importantly the direction we're headed.

The Department of Defense is the world's largest user of fossil fuels, and the Navy uses more a third of that. So, when I took this job almost seven years ago, these issues made energy a priority because of how much it impacts our combat capability, and because of the cost that it imposes on us. At the height of the fighting in Afghanistan, we were losing one Marine killed or wounded for every 50 convoys of fuel brought in. That's way too high a price to pay.

The goals that I set were about one thing: they were about making us a better military force. We're greener. Our carbon footprint is smaller. But those those are good side points. It's not the reason that we're greener. It gives us a strategic advantage. It expands our options to fuel our fleet. Improving energy efficiency gives us a force protection advantage, taking convoys off the road and reducing the time of ships with oilers at sea.

And I'll give you one specific example of this flexibility. In Singapore, the oil refinery there is owned by China. Right down the road is an alternative fuel refinery owned by a Finnish company. Don't we need the ability to get fuel from either one of those sources? And wouldn't it be terrible if we hadn't certified all our ships, all our aircraft on alternative fuels, so that we do have that flexibility if the cause arises?

For those of you who heard me speak before, as Admiral Shoemaker said, the four fundamental principles that I've tried to use to lead the Navy and Marine Corps are people, our Sailors and Marines; platforms, our ships and our aircraft; partnerships, external relationships around the world and with the American people; and power, how we fuel the department.

I'm going to take them in sort of reverse order. We wouldn't be here today without partnerships, without the Secretary of Agriculture, without the Department of Agriculture. Tom Vilsack is one of the most visionary leaders we have in America today. In 2011, President Obama directed the Department of Agriculture under Secretary Vilsack and the Department of the Navy to partner with the private sector to develop a domestic advanced biofuel industry. As a result, two years ago we set up the Farm-to-Fleet program. At the time, Secretary Vilsack said

it perfectly: America's Navy shouldn't have to depend on oil supplies from foreign nations to ensure our national defense, and rural America stands ready to provide clean, homegrown energy that increases our military's energy independence and puts Americans to work.

Well, today this ship behind me is fueled with a blend that we bought from AltAir, an American company close to here, in Paramount, California. The fuel cost the Department of Defense \$2.05 a gallon. I want to repeat that: this fuel cost the American taxpayer, cost the U.S. government \$2.05 a gallon.

Now, a lot was made in 2012, when we demonstrated the Great Green Fleet, of the cost of the fuel. Well, yeah, we bought a very small amount and it was a demonstration. The world didn't stop in 2012. We paid \$26 a gallon then. We're paying 13 times less today, just three-and-a-half years later. That's the story. That's the success: \$2.05 a gallon.

We only have three requirements for biofuels. One is that they be a drop-in fuel. We're not changing our engines. We're not doing anything. It has to be exactly the same. Two is that it takes no land out of food production. And three, that it be cost competitive. Well, today, even with the dramatic drop in oil prices, it's competitive. It's competitive today. And using the market, the Defense Logistics Agency bid out this fuel and this is what came back. Cost competitive, \$2.05 a gallon.

And I want to – I want to thank the Defense Logistics Agency, DLA. They were the people that actually bought this fuel – 77.7 million gallons, the largest purchase of biofuel ever undertaken. DLA, using the tools that it has, using the marketplace, has successfully brought us to this day.

And we're not the only ones doing it. The private sector too – United Airlines, Alaska Airlines, Cathay Pacific, Southwest Airlines, UPS, FedEx all buying alternative fuels in the air, and on the ground. FedEx, UPS, and even Disney are buying alternative fuels to fuel their ground fleets. By having both the military and the commercial world do this, it expands the market and it lowers the cost. All these companies I just named are in business to make money. They're buying this because it's a better idea. They're buying this because it makes the better in the future. We're working around the world. We have agreements now with Chile, with Italy, with Australia on alternative fuels.

And that brings me to, inevitably, the fighting force. As Admiral Shoemaker said, every single ship in this flag group is operating on alternative fuels, the carrier most of all. Nuclear powered, one of the original alternative fuels. We're rebuilding the fleet. On 9/11/2001, the U.S. Navy had 316 ships. Seven years later, in 2008, we were down to 278 ships. And in that seven years, the Navy put 41 ships under contract – not enough to keep our fleet from shrinking more, and not enough to keep our shipyards in business.

I took office almost exactly seven years ago. By the end this fiscal year, with the ships we've already got under contract, the ships we've got authorized and appropriated from Congress, in these seven years we will have 84 ships under contract, with a 20 percent smaller

overall top line. We're going to get the fleet back where it needs to be, more than 300 ships, by the end of this decade.

We're not just doing different sorts of fuels, we're also using those fuels way more efficiently. Two of our newest amphibious ships – in fact, one of them left this morning, the Makin Island, run on hybrid drive. The Makin Island in our first deployment – they've got normal diesel for speeds over 12 knots, electric power for speeds under 12 knots. On its first deployment, Makin Island brought back almost half its fuel budget. But maybe more important, they stayed out 44 days longer than they would have without that. That's the reason we're building all our big-deck amphibs with hybrid drives. It's the reason we're beginning to retrofit two of our destroyers with the same thing.

And finally, people, our Sailors and our Marines. The cultural shift in the Navy, the cultural shift in the Marine Corps is what's driving all of this. The innovation is coming from the fleet, it's coming from the Deckplate, it's coming from the field with the Marines. All you have to do is look out here. Marines hold two ExFOBs a year, expeditionary forward operating bases, where they invite industry in: What have you got in terms of alternative energy that will help the Marines in the fight? And it's everything from small, portable, roll-able solar blankets that saves a company of Marine 700 pounds of batteries and so that they don't have to be resupplied, so that they don't have to be dependent on a convoy. And we supported those solar blankets, making energy wherever they are.

We've got a thing called Task Force Innovation. And there is a website called – The Hatch – where you can enter your ideas, ideas that we can implement in the fleet. This is how we can do things better. We had a chief that years ago said, put LED lights on your ships. Well, we're doing that now. Every time we put a ship into a shipyard for an availability, we're changing the lightbulbs. It's like that. It's LED lights. It saves that ship 20,000 gallons of fuel a year just changing the lights. And it gives you better light. And you don't have to change it nearly as often – years versus a few months.

Sailors are doing things like using an energy dashboard, giving them real time exactly what they're doing and how they're running the ship and what that can do for fuel consumption. As our CNO, Admiral John Richardson, said, everybody's pitching in here. We're making every kilowatt go farther, every gallon of fuel count. And it's making us a smarter Navy. The Marines, as Marines always are, are upfront with things like the solar blankets, but also with kinetic systems for their backpacks and knee braces. So you take a Marine's energy as they're hoofing all that stuff, and turn it into real energy, so that they can power their radios, so that they can power the GPSs. And I'd like to take a look at using these things all across the fleet. We're doing it for one reason. We're doing it to be better at our jobs. We're doing it to be a better Navy and Marine Corps. We're looking to make a better force.

And finally, back to power. In 2009, we set some energy goals. We demonstrated the Great Green Fleet in 2012. We said we would sail it in 2016. And here we are today. But another goal was that by 2020 – as the president put in his State of the Union in 2012 – by 2020 the Navy would buy half its shore-based energy from alternative sources. We're a sea-going service, but we do have 3 ½ million acres of land and 117,000 buildings. So we use a little

energy on shore. We use two gigawatts a year. As Congressman Peters said, two months ago we announced the biggest purchase any governmental agency ever made on alternative fuels, on solar power, to power 15 bases in Southern California.

Let me tell you, on the shore, we're there today. We've got either in the ground or in procurement 1.1 gigawatts of alternative power for our bases. We did it five years early – five years early. Here in California, we put in the largest RFP for electric vehicles – use of electric vehicles in history, more than 400 to use on our bases. It's a product of another partnership, with the state of California, that keeps us heading toward for our goal of reducing oil use in our non-tactical fleet by 50 percent.

Now, when I talked about setting these goals, some people were, I'll put it this way, skeptical. But let me show you how far we've come. A recent report from the Officer of the Undersecretary of Defense for acquisitions of all fuel systems, said that the Navy's demand for oil from 2009 to 2014 went down 15 percent. We're using 15 percent less oil. The Marines are using 60 percent less oil in the same time. The Navy has always been a leader when it comes to energy. From sail to coal in the middle of the 19th century, coal to oil early in the 20th century, pioneering the use of nuclear in the middle of the 20th century.

And every single time – every single time there were naysayers. You can't do that. You're trading one thing that's free, the wind, for something that costs you money, coal. You're trading all these coaling stations around the world for an unproven source of fuel, oil. You will never make nuclear power small enough or safe enough to put on a submarine or a carrier. Every single time, every single time they were dead wrong. And they're wrong again this time. And we're proving it.

A foreign chief of the Navy told me that the difference between soldiers and sailors was that soldiers look down and saw lines on a map, and saw obstacles. Sailors look out. They look the horizon. They saw no obstacles. They saw the open sea. They saw no lines. It set me to thinking. I couldn't be more proud of what the Sailors and Marines have done to free us and give us operational flexibility in terms of energy, reduce the amount and types of energy that we use. The Navy and Marine Corps are going to continue to lead, their eyes on the horizon, the greatest expeditionary fighting force the world has ever known.

From the Navy, Semper Fortis, Always Courageous. From the Marines, Semper Fidelis, Always Faithful. Thank you.