

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus  
Secretary of the Navy  
Navy/Agriculture  
Memorandum of Understanding Signature Ceremony  
Pentagon, Washington, DC  
Thursday, January 21, 2010

Roger (Natsuhara), thank you. Congressman Mike McIntyre, thank you so much for being here today to bring both of those committees together and both those interests that we represent here today. Thank you Secretary Tom Vilsack, Under Secretary Dallas Tonsager, Director Kidd, Mr. Russell, and all of the people who have come out today to witness this occasion.

I do want to say a personal word here about Tom Vilsack. I have gotten the opportunity to know Governor, now Secretary Vilsack and his family over the past couple of years very well. I have spent time in the Governor's mansion in Iowa and have met him in many different places and we are extraordinarily grateful to have him serve this country. Thank you for everything that you do for us.

Thank you all for being here to witness the formation of this partnership between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Navy. It is a partnership that will build on our independent strengths and our mutual experience in renewable energy and biofuel development.

It is also a partnership that in its ambition reinforces the President's commitment to change the way energy is used and energy is produced in the United States. The President has said it very clearly: energy reform is a national security imperative, an economic necessity, and the right thing to do as responsible custodians of our environment. Just as America bears a share of the responsibility in addressing climate

change globally<sup>1</sup>, we, as departments in the Federal Government, have a commensurate responsibility to address it within America through bold and ambitious action.

And we can have an effect. The military alone uses over 90 percent of the energy consumed by the Federal Government, and the Federal Government uses about 2 percent of all the energy consumed in America. Changing the Navy's pattern of energy consumption and our sources of power, and working with Agriculture to support renewable energy and biofuel projects around the country, we can and we will have a broad and measurable impact on the national energy landscape.

We are already taking the first steps. Last fall, we conducted an F/A-18 Hornet jet engine test at Pax River, running on a biofuel blend made from camelina, a plant related to mustard that can be grown throughout the United States. I do have to admit that I was a newcomer to camelina, but the F/A-18 engine didn't know the difference, even when it was put on full afterburner. Pretty soon, we'll move beyond these ground tests and conduct flights with our very own Green Hornet. And we are moving to expand the testing of biofuel blends in our Marine Gas Turbines that we use in the surface Navy, and to our tactical vehicles, like the one sitting here today.

Cue the Marines. (Sound of engine starting) It works!

By 2016, we are going to deploy the Great Green Fleet which is going to be powered entirely by alternative fuels. And by 2020 the Navy and Marine Corps will produce half of all our energy from alternative sources.

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<sup>1</sup> From President's speech in Copenhagen, 18 Dec 09.

In achieving these energy targets, the Navy and Marine Corps will, through every action and every program, improve the strategic or tactical warfighting capabilities of our forces. Through alternative energy use, improved technological efficiencies, and biofuel development, we are going to improve the range and endurance of our ships and our aircraft, reduce their reliance on a vulnerable supply chain, and create a resistance to the external shocks that come from overreliance on a fragile global oil infrastructure. The stakes are clear and the stakes are high. Our response must be equal to the challenge.

As our President said in Copenhagen, we have chosen bold action over inaction<sup>2</sup>. We are placing our faith in American ingenuity, American entrepreneurship, and American science to meet America's energy challenges. Today we have reaffirmed our pledge to make this energy change a reality. Thank you all and Godspeed.

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<sup>2</sup> President Obama, Copenhagen.