

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
Pacific Council on International Policy
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Mickey Kantor: First let me just say, I see Navy and Marine Corps personnel here, let me thank you all for your service to the country. Thank you.

This is really a pleasure. I guess we've known each other almost 25 years now. When I met Ray, you were not yet the Governor of Mississippi; you were a state auditor and had already become famous in an area of our country where I grew up. I grew up in Tennessee; Ray grew up in Mississippi where progressives weren't exactly viable as political candidates. But it was an interesting time in Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Florida, where governors were elected and some went even further than that - as Ray did and his sea mate from Arkansas. They did great work, especially Ray did in jobs and education, and I think Ray was honored a number of times for his role in education.

But that's not all Ray did. As auditor and governor he set a standard, I think for governors all across the country. Then in the Clinton Administration he was our ambassador to Saudi Arabia where he was extremely, extremely effective, as Secretary Christopher will tell you. The Saudis, of course, dropped their boycott during your period in Saudi Arabia. You were enormously effective there. And of course now it's turned out, as Secretary of the Navy.

I've got to say that both Ray and I were junior officers in the Navy, we were lieutenant JG's and I think that was our major accomplishment. I was a supply officer, I was the Ensign Pulver of my generation, but Ray was a weapons officer. He really had real priorities and responsibilities. You always believed he could run the Navy better than anyone else. Now,

some of you folks have been on ships and were junior officers at the time, or served in other capacities, were enlisted folks, all of us always believed we could do it better. So now Ray, here you are, and we hope that you can do it better. I'm trying to remember all those things I thought should be done. Most of them had to do with the mess deck, so I'm not sure if that's your highest priority.

But I do want to start with one thing I'd like you to talk about, and I was emotionally so pleased to see what you did - you named a ship after Medgar Evers - just the other day, and I think Myrlie Evers was with you when you did so. Talk about that, talk about the Navy, how far the Navy's come in terms of minorities, women, and other folks. As you and I remember when we were in the Navy, there were very few racial minorities; certainly no women served on ships during that time. Talk about what you're trying to do, how you see it strengthening the Navy and how important you see it.

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: All right, Mickey. I'm going to take just one second of personal privilege here to thank my friend Mickey Kantor who I have known for maybe 25 years, and who's hosted me a lot of times, and who I'm really proud to be here with. I'm not going to get into naming everybody in the audience, but Jerry Green, who has also been my friend, has been in my house in Mississippi and spoken to a class I taught at Ole Miss, I thank you for this. And to my old boss, Warren Christopher, who was a great Secretary of State.

You know one of the very, very best things the Secretary of the Navy gets to do is name every ship that the Navy produces. The first ship that came along was about two weeks ago, a TAKE, which is a supply ship, a very large ship made in San Diego. This class of ship has been named for explorers, visionaries, and American heroes. And I thought Medgar Evers was all of those, that he was a visionary, he dreamed of a better America, a better Mississippi; that he was a

pioneer, he blazed some trails that so many of us have followed; and that he was a hero, he gave his life for his country. And, I couldn't think of a better person to name a ship for. His widow, Myrlie, was there; his brother, Charles, was there at the meeting. We had it at Jackson State at the Fannie Lou Hamer Institute, another civil rights pioneer. And the emotion when we put the picture up of this ship and Medgar Evers was pretty powerful.

I think that the Navy that you and I were in about four decades ago has changed dramatically. It's not just the technology, although it's gotten a lot better; it's not just the equipment, although that's improved by exponential bounds; it is the Sailors and the Marines that we have today. We have a CNO, Chief of Naval Operations, that is passionately committed to diversity, particularly in the upper ranks of the Navy and we just named our first female strike group commander. You're seeing women in all areas of the Navy. We just announced, about two weeks ago, that women are going to be serving on submarines - the last place in the Navy that women have not served at sea, and that's going to happen pretty shortly. You're seeing minorities in increasing levels of responsibility, because while enlisted ranks have looked like America for a good while, our officer ranks have not. But you're seeing in the new class of the Naval Academy this year the highest percentage of minorities in its history. You're seeing this not only in the Navy, but in the Marine Corps.

I spent yesterday at Camp Pendleton with Marines, with Tony Jackson, a three-star, minority Marine general. So, I think that the military, as it's done a good many times in the past, has gotten it right on diversity, has gotten it right on openness, has gotten it right on promotion by merit, and that the quality of your work is way more important than the color or shade of your skin.

Mickey Kantor: Let's talk about force levels, morale. I know the Navy has been heavily positioned off the coast of Iraq, is engaged in Operations in Afghanistan and has been combating piracy off of Somalia's coast; there's no end of missions that you have. Talk about where the Navy is today; how your recruiting is going – we read just a year ago it was fairly slow in the military – I don't know that it was in the Navy, but how is it today and how do you see it in the future?

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: Today, we have record enlistments. We have record retention in the Navy and the Marine Corps. Both the Navy and Marine Corps met their quotas a little bit ahead of the end of the fiscal year. But we've had to slow down recruiting because we're getting so many people and we were keeping so many people.

Let me tell you some of the things that the Navy is doing. We not only provide about half the combat air over Afghanistan off carriers in the Indian Ocean, but we have more Sailors on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan than we do at sea in that area, we have 14,000 Sailors on the ground. I was in Afghanistan in August and we went to a province called Paktika, which is down in southeastern Afghanistan right on the Pakistani border. It is a very remote, very high, very rural, real tough area. There's a Provincial Reconstruction Team there run by a Navy submarine commander and both his chiefs are submariners. The very first question I got at an all hands talk was, we can only stay here for nine months; will you let us extend and stay here for 18 months? They're doing very hard, very important, and sometimes very dangerous work.

But it's not just the Sailors and Marines in Afghanistan, although we have 12,000 Marines mainly in Southern Afghanistan in the Helmand Province. We still have about 10,000 Marines in Iraq who are drawing down very responsibly. We have ships off the coast of East Africa, off the Horn of Africa doing anti-piracy missions. We've had ships, in the last two

months, who have been in American Samoa, in Indonesia, and in the Philippines doing disaster relief. We do partnership building, the African Partnership Station in the Pacific, a partnership where we go and train foreign navies and marine corps. We even have two Marines in Mongolia helping to train the Mongolian Armed Forces. It's like you've heard of surges - you can surge people, you can surge equipment, but you cannot surge your trust. You have to build that, day in and day out, and that's what the Navy and the Marine Corps are doing worldwide. I think that's why we need a Navy and Marine Corps that are forward deployed, very flexible and able to do a lot of different missions with the same people, on the same platforms.

Mickey Kantor: Take us five to 10 years out, what kind of Navy are we looking for. And particularly, let me raise an issue, the issue is China and they're building a blue water navy and what that is about. How much it concerns you, if at all, and what does that mean in terms of what kind of Navy we're going to see five, 10 or 15 years from now?

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: Well, there's going to be, obviously some changes in all our military, particularly in the Navy, I think over the next five, 10, 15, 25 years. And I'm going to digress just a little bit - you're going to see a much greater United States Navy. We've got energy initiatives underway - 10 years from now half the energy that the Navy uses, ashore and afloat, is going to be from non-fossil fuels, and if we've got time I'd like to talk about that a little bit more. You're going to see a lot more unmanned vehicles - under the sea, on the sea, above the sea. I think it's going to change the way we approach warfare.

But in terms of any potential competitors, any potential rival, the way I think the Navy is needed is to be a persistent presence and to be a reassurance to our allies. It's by being there all the time with no footprint. We're always the away team if we're doing our job - the Navy and

Marine Corps. The thing I'd like to say is that we don't have to go home and get our guns, we take them with us. We've got missiles in the tubes, we've got planes on the deck, and we've got Marines embarked, fully equipped, to do whatever mission they may have to do.

If you're looking at issues that are coming, the President just made a decision on ballistic missile defense. He moved that defense mainly to a maritime defensive system, the Aegis destroyer. Sixteen of the 18 Aegis-equipped ballistic missile destroyers that we have are in the Pacific right now and they're standing guard every day. In those types of platforms you're going to see increased emphasis on ballistic missile defense because of states like North Korea; you're going to see increased emphasis on cyber warfare; you're going to see increased emphasis on unmanned vehicles, in terms of things like swarming tactics and stand-off capability.

So, I think that those are going to be some of the changes that you see. But in the end, the edge that we have, even though our technology is terrific, even though our equipment is wonderful, the edge that we have are our individual Sailors and Marines - nobody can touch them. The Marines have a concept called the strategic corporal - every corporal in the Marine Corps is trained to make decisions, to do the right thing, to make decisions in whatever capacity they're in. The Navy is similar. I don't think any country can match us in that. You go on a ship, you go on the deck of an aircraft carrier during flight ops and you've got multimillion dollar airplanes being moved around, high explosives being moved around, and the average age of the Sailors on that flight deck is 19. And, I don't think anybody can do that except us; I don't think any fighting force in the world can do what our Sailors and Marines can do.

Mickey Kantor: I was always impressed; I was on a carrier deck myself.

The Chinese - just give us a couple of sentences on where you think they are in building a blue water navy. What do you see as their purpose? How much does that concern you?

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: Well, I tell you, anytime any country develops the capabilities that China has clearly developed - submarine capability, cyber capability, missile capability - and I think if you look at the Chinese capabilities, they're all designed to push anybody, but particularly the U.S. Navy and our fleets, away from the China coasts and to establish more of a dominance close to China. I think that's one of the reasons I talked about our persistent presence being important, because we've got a lot of allies near China. We've got a lot of allies in that ring of countries.

But the other thing is that it's important for us to engage the Chinese, for us to find ways to cooperate with the Chinese particularly. The easiest diplomacy right now may be Navy to Navy. The Chinese have ships off of the Horn of Africa fighting piracy, and while they're not part of our task force, we're cooperating on those things. We can cooperate at different levels in the Navy, in the Pacific, to make sure that we do understand each other, that we do understand each other's purpose, each other's policies, and so that there aren't the misunderstandings that can lead to an escalating tension. I think that Navy to Navy is one of the best ways to do that, and I know that we've been reaching out to the Chinese to do that with sort of mixed success, but it's not going to stop us from continuing to do that.

Mickey Kantor: Just a quick one while we're on Asia. The Democratic Party of Japan just won a historic election in Japan. They have now stopped their refueling operation - withdrawn from it.

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: They say they're going to in January.

Mickey Kantor: Yeah, but when the year is out. They also are raising the Status of Forces Agreement and are raising the issue of any secret agreement between the U.S. and Japan which has never been made public about the U.S. bringing nuclear weapons into ports in Japan. I'm not going ask you about the latter because you wouldn't tell me; you'd have to kill me if you did. But I do want to talk about if that concerns you? Does Prime Minister Hatoyama and his administration seem to be pushing towards a more Asia-oriented concern about their involvement with the U.S. military or the U.S. umbrella? Does that concern you at all or is that something that's a little twig in the back of your mind that you have to worry about everyday?

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: I was in Japan the week of the election and it was pretty clear which direction that election was going to go. It was also pretty clear, I think, that the reason the election went the way it did, as do a lot of elections, was because of domestic issues, domestic economic issues mainly.

We have several agreements with Japan that are government to government, and they're not with any particular political party on our side or theirs. We fully anticipate that the Japanese are going honor these agreements.

And Mickey, if we do have a secret agreement, they haven't told me about it yet.

But we do have 18,000 Marines on Okinawa right now. We have an agreement to move 8,000 of those Marines primarily to Guam, and the Japanese government has agreed to pay for part of that move. They've also agreed to build a new runway for our Marines to replace the one in Futenma because the city has surrounded the existing runway with a lot of encroachments, and for safety reasons, for noise reasons, for a lot of reasons, it needs to be moved. We anticipate and expect that we're going to go forward with this agreement.

In terms of other agreements, we are forward deployed there. We have home ported nuclear aircraft carrier, the George Washington in Yokosuka. That was a result of a lot of negotiation, a lot of trust between the two countries, and it has been working very, very well. I met with the Mayor of Yokosuka when I was there, and he and I think the citizens of Yokosuka are very, very happy with the George Washington and its strike group being home ported there.

So again, these agreements that we have with the Japanese – who we think are one of our most important allies, one of our most important bilateral relations - are going to be honored going forward and we're looking forward to it. The last thing I'll say is, I mentioned ballistic missile defense – we work very closely with the Japanese in the Sea of Japan between Korea and them with both the Japanese and American Aegis-equipped ships.

Mickey Kantor: You mentioned, and I wanted to get to that, about a drive to make the Navy more environmentally sensitive, to use less fossil fuels. I know a little bit about the F-18 and you are actually going to use alternative fuels in the F-18, which I find to be terrific. How in the world do you do that with that powerful airplane? But, why don't you go through that, what you're trying to do on both of the ship's airplanes and your shore stations all around the world.

Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus: I'll start with the F-18. We did a test last week of an F-18 engine using alternative fuels. It worked fine, the engine didn't care. And we're going to fly that plane. You know the F-18 is called the Hornet, it's going to be our Green Hornet. One hundred years ago, President Roosevelt sent the Great White Fleet around the world. In 2016, the U.S. Navy is going to field a Carrier Strike Group, and deploy it, that burns no fossil fuels and is all alternative energy. Now we've got a head start. We already power all our subs and all our carriers with nuclear power.

We're trying to do two things; we're trying to be more energy efficient and trying to turn to an alternative source of fuel. The main reason we're doing it is war fighting. It gives us the edge in fighting, to not be dependent on fuel from volatile regions of the world. Now it also gives us a tactical advantage if we're more efficient because every time we don't have to refuel at sea, we are a better fighting force. We're not going to do anything that doesn't improve our war fighting and strategic naval capabilities.

I'll give you some specific goals, as I said, by 2020, half of all the shore power will come from non-fossil fuels. The Navy has a habit of being a leader in things like this. When Roosevelt sent the Great White Fleet around, Congress would not appropriate money for it. They said it was a waste. He sent it anyway. He had enough money to get it about halfway around the world; he said he assumed that Congress would want it back. Right before the Civil War, the Navy traded sail for steam, and there were a lot of naysayers saying that we were trading one very proven technology for one that was not, but it was proven to great effect in the Civil War. Then around the turn of the 20th Century, we moved from coal to oil and again, you had an infrastructure of coaling bases around the world and people said, why in the world are you switching to oil? Every time the naysayers have been proven wrong, including our move to nuclear power in the 1950s for aircraft carriers and submarines, which have a long unbroken history of safe operation, dramatically improved range, and staying capabilities.

A couple of the other goals that we have – we're going to, in five years, have half our commercial fleet, on fossil fuels. The Navy and Marine Corps own 50,000 vehicles and turn them over about every five years. We're just going to buy different kinds of vehicles, and that's going to be pretty easy. It's going to save us some money to buy different kinds of vehicles and cut way down on fossil fuel usage. By 2020 half our bases will be net-zero in terms of power.

We're not going to get power from the grid. We've already got a base here in California, China Lake, that produces 20 times the energy it uses from solar and hydrothermic. We're looking for all sorts of energy sources. Finally, when we were going through this and I was looking at the goals, I was told that 40 percent by 2020 was a stretch, but it was doable, that we didn't have the infrastructure, and the cost was just too high to do 50 percent, the cost of the fuel, not the cost of the ships. The cost of the fuel is just too high. In a sort of a twist on *Field of Dreams*, my view is if the Navy comes, they will build it and, if there is a demand, it will be met.

I said that was the last thing. I'm going to do one more thing. The cost of a gallon of gasoline delivered to a fighting unit of Marines in Afghanistan is very expensive. You've got to get it to Pakistan. You've got to either truck it over land or fly it to a forward base. Then you've got to get it out to the Marine in the field. Every time we can knock out that gallon of gasoline, every time we can help with more efficient fuel so we don't use as much, or more efficient houses or more efficient equipment, we've not only saved money, but we've also saved all those Marines guarding that fuel or transporting that fuel.

So there are a lot of reasons for doing this and I am absolutely convinced that we're going to lead the country and we're going to lead the Department of Defense. The Department of Defense uses 93 percent of all the energy used by the federal government, and 2 percent of all the energy used in America. If we can do it, everybody can do, and we're going to do it in the next 10 years.

Mickey Kantor: I think that's a perfect place to jump off now, to ask all of you to step forward, stand up, ask questions.

(The Question and Answer portion of this discussion was off-the-record.)