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Remarks to
Surface Navy Association
Washington, D.C.
30 May 1997

I appreciate the opportunity to spend a little time and sharing a few thoughts with you today. I'll do that, and then I'll turn my transmitter off and turn my receiver on, and I'll be happy to deal with any questions or ideas or comments that you might have.

I came here from another event today that I thought was a very special ceremony and that is that we just retired one of our true superstars in the intelligence community, Rear Admiral Mike Cramer out at NIMEC in Suitland. We had a wonderful ceremony out there and rendered what I think were appropriate honors to Mike for all he's done for his country for the last three decades and passed his command to Rear Admiral Larry Poe who as many of you know is a US Naval Reserve intelligence officer. So the Naval Reserve force is in action again out there. On behalf of the entire OPNAV staff I just wanted to mention publicly how much we appreciate what Mike Cramer has done for our Navy and our country for the past 30 years. He's been a real asset to us.

I'd thought I'd roll through a couple of things today. The first of which is what I usually do when I have a captive audience. I'd like to remind everybody what our Navy is doing today and this will be no exception.

It is a busy day for the Navy today. We're still at 350 ships and 492,000 people - about 396,000 on the active side and 96,000 on the reserve. And, as I've already highlighted, we really are a total force. I liked the way Mike Cramer described it this morning. My usual comment has to do with it's not a bumper sticker to us, it's the reality. The way Mike describes it I think paints an even better picture. He said the integration of the reserves is indistinguishable and indispensable, and it really is and we're very proud of that. So we've got 492,000 of us scattered around the world. Today, 53% of our ships are at sea - 32% of them are forward deployed - that's 112 ships and about 54,000 Navy men and women and Marines. We're doing 10 operations or exercises and making port calls in 13 countries today. A classic example of our relevance and our contribution is live and in color on CNN today. All you have to do is look at it and see what's happening on USS KEARSAGE off the coast of Sierra Leone in the midst of a non-combatant evacuation operation for hundreds of Americans and third country nationalists. That's what we do 365 days of the year around the world. Nobody else can do that and we do it better than anybody else. So I think you should all be very proud that you're a piece of that. I don't care if you wear a uniform, if you used to wear a uniform, if you're a civilian member or a member of

industry - we all need to tell that story because it's the relevance of Naval forces forward deployed and it's a great contribution to this country. That's the Navy today.

We'll talk about QDR here in a minute, but I thought I'd talk a little about people for a second. I always like to remind our Sailors when I go around the world and talk to them, where they stack on the priority list for this CNO and for the whole Navy. I will tell you, not surprisingly, that they stack right on the top. Our people are our most precious asset - there's no question about that. Sometimes, particularly around here we get into the programmatic of things and tend to focus on hardware and software, but the truth of it is, none of it is worth a darn if we don't get great people, and we do, and we want to keep them and take care of them. I'd like to remind everyone that they are all, every one of them, volunteers. They are here because they want to be, not because they have to be. It's a heck of an obligation to meet for those of us in leadership positions to make sure we take care of them. So with all of the turbulence and discussions and downsizing, and all of the chaff that's in the air, it's important to us to draw a very clear bead on how important our people are to us and to put them in the middle of every decision we make. I want that reminder out there and I encourage each of you to think of them in those terms as well. They are the most important asset we have and we have to take care of them.

I would talk a little bit about some of the programs we have - we can do more of the Q&A's if you'd like. I have lots of subject matter experts all around me here if it really gets tough, but I would say this at the top. I'll talk a little bit about the shipbuilding programs and where we are, and where we're going. I'm going to talk about submarines and all kinds of things. I do that deliberately because one touches the other. It's all part of a very the coherent plan and there are lots of pieces in that plan and if you touch one of them and move it, then everything else has to move with it. So it's important to think of in terms of an overall plan that we're going to execute.

I'll talk first about aircraft carriers. CVN-77, which is the tenth and last Nimitz class carrier, is part of our program. It's in the budget, it's fully funded, and we look forward to it showing up about two years into the next century and that's very important to us. Along with CVN-77, we're putting a considerable amount of R&D investments to the follow-on class of aircraft carrier, presently called CVX. That investment track will go in parallel with the CVN-77. We're also making a pretty sizable R&D investment in CVN-77 to truly make it a transitional ship, to learn what we can learn relative to new technology applications, reduce manning, and things like that which will make us smarter about where we want to go with CVX. It's kind of a two-track, parallel strategy with those two platforms, and as I say, that's well in the plan.

On the DDG-51 side - right now we have a multi-year buy. That's twelve of them which we're working final details on with several more to follow. I won't say much more than that right now other than we're really excited about the multi-year procurement plan because we believe it's going to get us more ships for fewer dollars and then we can turn those dollars around

and buy more ships. So that's all in hand and working very well right now.

The New Attack Submarine program is one which has captured a lot of attention and a lot of interest. It's very important to us. You know we have three Sea Wolf submarines - the first of which will be commissioned here in July with two more to follow - followed by a new class called the New Attack Submarine, of which we are hoping for lots of them. We will need 30 at least. We have in our plan right now a four ship buy over five years which will be done via a teaming arrangement between Electric Boat and Newport News Shipbuilding - something we've never done before with a major program. We've done it with the large scale vehicles - actually that's where the idea came from. We think it's the right answer for us and we're very excited about what the New Attack Submarine will give to the country. It will have great ability in the big water and it will also have awesome capability in the littorals and that's really probably as much the focus of effort as anything so we're excited about the New Attack Submarine.

On the amphib side, we are redefining the Amphibious Ready Group of tomorrow. That's part of the plan as well. We're going to have 12 of them and they are going to center around two ships. The first is the LHA/LHD. We were down in Pascagoula a couple of weeks ago to break the bottle on the USS BONHOMME RICHARD (LHD-6). Mrs. Jack Murtha did that. It was a wonderful event and a tremendous asset that will be joining us in another year or so. We're going to have 12 LHA/LHD's. The LPD 17 the first one should be building here any day and we're anxious to get 12 of those in the fleet. The third ship type for the ARG component will be the LSD-41/49 class and that will be the ARG of the future. It will meet our needs and it will meet the needs of the Marine Corps. We're very excited about it and it's underway.

I will mention SC-21 the following way: You've heard about Arsenal Ship. I will tell you based on lots of things, not the least of which is the COEA that we finished for SC-21, we have taken the original Arsenal Ship concept and evolved it to what we call the Maritime Fire Support Demonstrator. That ship, that demonstrator, is going to teach us how to make an SC-21 and by that I mean there will be some fundamental changes in the way we're going to do business with that ship class. It's going to come in affordable - very affordable; it's going to come in very low manned, like 95 or fewer; and it's going to pack a lot of wallop. We're talking right now the vision that RADM Murphy and his team and all of us here have in our head is one that says the first variant, the first exposure of the SC-21 is going to be something called Land Attack Destroyer (DD 21). It's going to have in it a 5 inch 62 gun that's going to range out to about 75 miles. It's going to have 1500 rounds for a vertical gun that can shoot precision rounds 100 miles. It's going to have two 64-tube VLS's in it that will shoot anything in inventory including Navy TACAMS out to about 160 miles. That's awesome. That's the Land Attack Destroyer. We don't know how to get there from here unless we go to school with that maritime fire support demonstrator. We're working that flow right now, if you will, and we're excited about it. It's different because the technology applications are going to be very significant. We really do believe we have to demonstrate it before we build it.

We really are shifting to what were calling offensive distributed fire power connecting us to lots of different entities of all services using technology to allow us to bring weapons to bear in very precise ways that we haven't been able to do before. It has to do with, as I said, offensive distributed fire power. It has to do with fundamental shift, that takes us from what we call Platform Centric Warfare to what we call Network Centric Warfare. It has to do with speed of command and things that flatten hierarchies and puts you in parallel instead of series and really speeds the change you can leverage against an enemy or a circumstance. All of that is new and very exciting and leading-edge stuff. It's RMA (Revolution in Military Affairs) squared as far as I'm concerned and we'll be putting a lot of energy and effort and enthusiasm towards it. That's a pretty good picture in my view. That's probably a capsule overview of the surface ship construction plan.

The Aegis fleet is absolutely core to that. You need to know that into this offensive distributive firepower piece fall things like CEC, which is absolutely critical for our future. We're committed to it - it's the right thing for us. Also the theater ballistic missile defense applications in our Aegis Cruisers are very exciting and right for the Navy, but more importantly, I believe right for the country. So we're very aggressively proceeding ahead with both our area defense system - lower tier - whatever you want to call it, and also our upper tier theater systems. And we believe that's going to be the right answer for the country. So we're excited about that. A lot is going on. I must also say that all of you are being extremely well served by RADM Dan Murphy and his team. They've got great ideas, they know what to do with them, they've got a great sense of balance and perspective inside the building and they know how to work with everybody. You could not be better served than you are right now. Dan, my hat's off to you.
[APPLAUSE]

Let me talk briefing about the Quadrennial Defense Review. The QDR was about a strategy, and the force structure that we need to execute that strategy. The QDR, in my opinion, was also about reality and that has to do with what we can afford and the realities that all of us have to deal with day in and day out. It's also about risk and taking the product that's gone forward from the Secretary of Defense and using that - and this is important - as the start point - not the end point. You know that the QDR submission has taken place, but now what happens for the rest of this year is that it will be worked with the Congress, it will be worked with the National Defense Panel, and there will be lots going on to fine tune and reiterate that product through to the end of this year. But for us, the Navy, I will tell you that I believe that the Navy and the Marine Corps were well represented in the QDR.

If you look at the strategy and the three elements to that strategy, it talks about shaping - shaping the environment day in and day out. That's us. We do that. We do it better than anybody else. It's about responding to crises across the full spectrum. Every time we send a Battle Group or Amphibious Ready Group forward, they have the capability to do exactly that. That's what we train them to do. And it's about preparing now

for tomorrow. What that really translates to is recapitalizing and putting in place solid, solvent programs that allow you to build a force for tomorrow which is what we've just been talking about with the ships I just described. So, I believe we're pretty well served by all of that. It reaffirms the relevance of forward presence in my view. It also very specifically reaffirms the need for at least 12 Carrier Battle Groups and 12 Amphibious Ready Groups as the core of the Naval service. That's a pretty good paint in my opinion.

There are a lot of people who would shoot at it - there are lots of people with their own opinion, but I will tell you that we were invested in that process all the way through. There's no mystery in there to us and most of the things that came out from a Navy perspective were exactly what we wanted going in. So I feel we were well represented in QDR and we're going to go hard at work to make the product a reality. It will cause us to reshape. It will change the number of surface combatants we have from 128 or 131 - depending on which year you start - to about 116. We need to do that anyway. It means retiring legacy systems and replacing them with some of the things I just described. We are collectively and I am personally very much OK with that. It will reshape our submarine numbers a little bit and it will cause us to use some other things. I won't get into the airplane discussion, but it will cause us to reshape some of the airplane profiles - we'll deal with all of that and we've got lots of time to do it. On the airplane side I would just say that the commitment is there for the F/A-18E/F, and it's there for the Joint Strike Fighter, which are the two platforms of choice out into the next two decades of the next century. It's also a hard-core commitment to the V22 which is absolutely essential for our Marines brethren in order to get rid of these H46's which are almost all older than the pilots who are flying them. So that's a pretty good paint for me.

To capsule everything, I would put it to you like this. Specific to the surface warfare community, and I'm not just saying this because I'm speaking to the SNA, but because you have heard me say it before. I believe this is a very exciting time in surface warfare. Interesting enough, I spend a lot of time with midshipmen and junior officers and there's great excitement and enthusiasm in those ranks too. That is the real measure to me. We don't have trouble finding young men and women who want to go to sea in the surface community and I think that's wonderful.

It's not perfect out there. We're working some realities and challenges in surface, submarine, and in aviation. I believe the non-deployed part of our lives needs to get looked at and we need to reshape that a little bit and make it a little more balanced than it is right now. I think we're overstressing ourselves on the non-deployed side. We've got that for action and we'll fix it. But all in all, it's pretty wonderful as you project yourself shooting forward. I wish I was a J0 again.

I thank you very much for your attention, and I look forward to your questions.

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