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THE COMMISSION ON
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AND RESERVES

STATEMENT

OF

GENERAL ROBERT MAGNUS
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE
MARINE CORPS

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON THE NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVES

ON

FUTURE ROLES AND MISSIONS OF THE GUARD AND RESERVES

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General
Robert Magnus
Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps

General Magnus is currently serving as the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington D.C.

Gen Magnus was commissioned in June 1969, after graduating from the University of Virginia with a B.A. In 1993, he received a M.S. from Strayer College. Gen Magnus' formal military education includes Naval Aviator Training, the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College (1985), and the National War College (1989).

Completing The Basic School at Quantico, Va. in 1969, Gen Magnus reported to the Naval Air Training Command. In 1971, he reported to HMMT-402, MCAS New River, for CH-46 training. Gen Magnus then joined HMM-264 as S-2 Officer and deployed on his first Landing Force Sixth Fleet cruise. In 1973, he was S-3 Officer, H&MS-15 SAR Detachment, Task Force Delta, Royal Thai AFB, Nam Phong, Thailand. In 1974, he was assigned as Training Officer, SOES, MCAS Quantico. Gen Magnus was released from active duty in October 1974.

In December 1975, Gen Magnus returned to active duty as Aviation Safety Officer, HMM-263, deploying for his second Sixth Fleet deployment. He then served as the Aviation Safety Officer, MAG-26, followed by duty as Assistant S-3/Weapons and Tactics Instructor, HMM-261, where he made his third Sixth Fleet deployment. He then served as Assistant S-4 Officer and Assistant S-3/Weapons and Tactics Instructor, MAG-26.

In 1980, Gen Magnus reported to Headquarters Marine Corps, where he served as the Aviation Training Devices Officer and Assault Medium Lift Requirements Officer. In 1985, he reported to MAG-29 as S-3 Officer. From 1986-88, Gen Magnus served as Executive Officer and then as Commanding Officer, HMM-365, making his fourth Sixth Fleet Deployment. From 1989-93, Gen Magnus served as the Chief, Logistics Readiness Center, Joint Staff, followed by duties as the Executive Assistant to the Director of the Joint Staff.

In 1993, Gen Magnus was assigned to Headquarters Marine Corps, as Head, Aviation Plans, Programs, Doctrine, Joint Matters, and Budget Branch. Selected for Brigadier General he was reassigned as Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation in July 1994. In July 1997, he reported as Commander, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area, MCAS El Toro, Calif. From 1999-2000, Gen Magnus served as Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Pacific. From July 2000-July 2001, he was the Assistant Deputy Commandant for Plans, Policies, and Operations (Quadrennial Defense Review). From August 2001 to August 2005, he served as Deputy Commandant for Programs and Resources.

His personal decorations include: Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, and the Navy Achievement Medal.

Introduction

Chairman Punaro, Secretary Ball, and other distinguished members of the Commission, it is my honor to report to you on the state of the Marine Corps Reserves. I would also like to offer my heartfelt thanks to Congress and the American people for their continued support of the Marine Corps.

I come before you today to describe the accomplishments, professionalism, commitment and selfless sacrifices made by our Marine Corps Reserves around the world, and the brave support of their families here in the homeland. From the battlefields of Al Anbar Province, Iraq to Gulf Port, Mississippi, our reserve Marines have been and continue to show that they are ready, relevant, capable, and eager to answer the Nation's call. Despite personal and family hardships, Marine Reservists continue to answer the call – they are engaged across the spectrum of conflict, from high intensity combat with Iraqi insurgents to selflessly helping their fellow citizens after Hurricane Katrina. Now entering the fifth year of what has been aptly termed The Long War, the Marine Corps can provide a broad range of capabilities across the full operational spectrum because of our seamless integration of our Active and Reserve Components in the Total Force.

Since September 11, 2001, over 32,000 Reserve Marines have set aside their civilian careers and their families to don the uniform as warriors and fight side by side with Active Component Marines in an irregular and often chaotic conflict. As an integral part of the Joint Force and the Naval Service, the roles, missions, functions, and structure of the Marine Corps has been shaped by the unique demands of expeditionary operations from the sea, in the littorals, as well as deep inland. The Marine Corps adheres to a Total Force construct, which standardizes and integrates an Active Component of 175,000 and

a Reserve Component of 39,600. Today's Marine Corps Reserve is comprised of 32,380 Marines in Selected Marine Corps Reserve (SMCR) drilling reserve units from across America, over 7,200 Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA) and nearly 58,000 Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Marines, which provide a pool of individual capabilities that can be drawn upon to further augment the SMCR or Active Component. Marine Corps Reserve Component forces are designed to the same tough warfighting standards as our Active Component forces, complementing, augmenting and reinforcing them as needed.

Recent examples of the augmenting and reinforcing capability of Marine Corps Reserve forces abound. Reserve infantry battalions from 23rd Marines (2/23 of Encino, CA) and 25th Marines (2/25 of Garden City, NY) were promptly mobilized to support defense of the homeland in the immediate aftermath of 9/11; then, in 2003, the same Marines (2/23 and 2/25) and two additional units (3/23 of New Orleans, LA and 1/24 of Detroit, MI) shifted to major combat operations and participated in the drive to Baghdad; 25th Marines further supported Marine Corps global requirements when 1/25 (Worcester, MA) deployed to Okinawa, Japan. Marines of Detachment A of the 4th Assault Amphibian Battalion (4th AABn) fought in Iraq in 2003 and then, in 2005, used their unique amphibious lift capabilities to rescue fellow citizens of Gulfport, Mississippi, just hours after Hurricane Katrina made landfall. Marines of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 (HMLA-773) (Marietta, GA) conducted immediate rescue, relief, and reconnaissance of New Orleans after Katrina decimated that city. Civil Affairs Teams from 3rd (Camp Pendleton, CA), 4th (Washington, DC), 5th (Baltimore, MD), and 6th (drawn from 30 states) Civil Affairs Groups have deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan

since 2003 and have served with distinction and valor. The capacity of our reserves to augment and reinforce the active force in such operations, and to provide unique capabilities such as civil affairs, reinforces the utility, flexibility and strength of the Total Force Marine Corps.

Operational Versus Strategic Roles of the Marine Corps Reserves

While there is no official definition of "Strategic Reserve," we can define the term as a portion or body of troops that is kept to the rear—in this case, physically in CONUS or at least held under the authority of the National leadership—that is withheld from action at the beginning of a war, in order to be available for decisive employment at a later time. With that admittedly informal definition in mind, we believe that the Marine Corps Reserve has served a recognizably "strategic" purpose from the time of its founding in 1916 until the end of the Vietnam War. Perhaps the distinguishing characteristic of that era was the practice of treating reserve units as essentially pools of semi-trained manpower, to be used upon mobilization as individual fillers into existing or new wartime units. While this practice served the Marine Corps well in World War II and in Korea, it was clearly not the optimum way of either training or retaining talented individual reservists, nor did it leverage the full potential of home-town or regionally-based reserve units.

The Marine Corps Reserve in the post-Vietnam War era shifted to a more "operational" focus as the reduction or elimination of some units in the active force drove an increasing reliance on the early mobilization of select combat and combat support units in Operational Plans. The first test of post-Vietnam Marine Corps Reserve

organization and mobilization procedures came in 1990-1991 during Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM. Our experience there validated the Marine Corps view of a more "operational" use of the SMCR. Although the initial deployment of U.S. forces featured units that were overwhelmingly drawn from the active component, subsequent deployments featured significant numbers of Marine Corps Reserve battalions, squadrons, companies and detachments. The Marine Corps activated 25,710 Reservists, which included 61% of the available reservists in the SMCR.

After Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM, the Marine Corps Total Force primarily served the Nation as a forward presence and contingency response force. Many reservists in high-demand specialties served as individual augments to staffs and in other capacities. Marine Corps reservists served as individual augments in peace operations and conflict throughout the 1990s, in places such as Bosnia (Operations PROVIDE PROMISE, DENY FLIGHT, and JOINT ENDEAVOR), Somalia (Operations RESTORE HOPE and CONTINUE HOPE), Kosovo (Operation ALLIED FORCE) and Haiti (Operations RESTORE DEMOCRACY and UPHOLD DEMOCRACY). The largest reserve unit activation of the 1990s occurred in 1994, when three volunteer rifle companies (473 Marines) were deployed to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba (Operation SEA SIGNAL) to guard refugee camps. This deployment provided OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO relief to the Active Component that was able to continue Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) deployments, the Unit Deployment Program (UDP) deployments to Japan and other force requirements supporting Regional Combatant Commander operations, including theater security cooperation and theater engagement activities. Throughout the 1990s, Marine Corps Reserve units were engaged in intensive

and focused training, education, and mobilization preparation. By September 10th, 2001, the Marine Corps Reserve was a well-trained force with high morale and a strong tradition of rapidly and effectively augmenting and reinforcing the active component when called upon by the nation, proud and eager to mobilize and be "first to fight."

The infamous attacks on the World Trade Center Towers and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 ushered in our present era of increased reliance on the Marine Corps Reserve. For the first time in over 60 years, the Nation demanded forces able to respond immediately to a host of homeland defense missions and the Marine Corps Reserve again proved ready for the call. The Marine Corps activated nearly 5,000 Marine Reservists, as part of units or individual augments, in support of Operations NOBLE EAGLE at home and ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF) in Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa. The Marine Corps provided Reserve aircraft squadrons, infantry battalions and supporting units for airspace and land security. Several examples are noteworthy. Marine Fighter Attack (VMFA) Squadron 321 (Andrews AFB, MD) commenced Combat Air Patrols in September, 2001. Second Battalion, Twenty-Fifth Marines (2/25, from Garden City, NY) was initially activated in December, 2001 and sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to assist Marine Corps Quick Reaction Force (QRF) and Air Contingency Battalion (ACB) requirements in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE. Second Battalion, Twenty-Third Marines (2/23, from Encino, CA), which was activated soon after 2/25, provided a similar capability augmentation on the west coast. Though the Marine battalions were never called upon to respond to a domestic attack or incident, they did enter the training cycles of the 2nd and 1st Marine Divisions respectively, providing Division commanders with additional assets and flexibility for crisis response.

Marine Forces Reserve units filled critical roles in the nation's defense by carrying out many global missions. Examples include: detachments of reserve KC-130T's from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport (VMGR) Squadrons 452 (Newburgh, NY) and 234 (Fort Worth, TX), which deployed to support OEF operations in Afghanistan; reserve Heavy Lift Helicopter (HMH) Squadron 772 (Willow Grove, PA) deployed 6 CH-53E's with 22nd MEU in 2002; HMH-769 (Edwards AFB, CA) deployed 2 CH-53E's with 11th MEU in 2002; and reserve provisional security platoons (sourced from 4th MARDIV from New Orleans, LA), which were assigned to guard U.S. Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Marine Reserves also provided operational tempo relief to the active forces by supporting Combined Arms Exercises in California and Hawaii, participating in the Unit Deployment Program to Okinawa, Japan, conducting humanitarian assistance and disaster relief operations in Central and South America, as well as conducting multinational "Partnership for Peace" exercises in Eastern Europe.

This past summer the Navy-Marine Corps team rapidly responded to natural disasters in the homeland, rescuing and supporting our fellow Americans along the Gulf Coast region ravaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Reserve Marines of Det A, 4th Assault Amphibian Bn- who lived in the direct path of the hurricane- exercised initiative and dedication, responding immediately to assist the citizens of Gulfport, MS. Special-Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Forces (2,654 Marines in six different task forces) comprised of both active and reserve Marines deployed to aid communities across Louisiana and Mississippi. While the Marine Corps is not designed specifically for homeland defense missions, the capability, adaptability, and ingenuity of the Marines and their combat units, especially the Reservists who lived along the Gulf Coast, were clearly

one of the success stories associated with the Nation's response to the destruction of the two hurricanes.

For the Marines and Sailors of Marine Forces Reserve Headquarters elements (Force HQ, 4th Marine Division, 4th Force Service Support Group, and 4th Marine Aircraft Wing), the opportunity to respond to this crisis was both challenging and gratifying. It was challenging in that Katrina's path of destruction directly impacted the headquarters and operations of our Marine Forces Reserve, its subordinate Division and Wing headquarters, as well as many Navy and Marine Corps Reserve Centers, but gratifying as these Marines were able to quickly and effectively render aid to their neighbors and friends in some of the hardest hit locales.

The past four years have demonstrated beyond a doubt that our Reserve Component possesses capability, flexibility, agility and eagerness to fight across the full spectrum of conflict to augment and reinforce our Active Component Marine Air Ground Task Forces. More than 7,000 reserve Marines are currently activated with over 5,500 in ground, aviation and combat support units and nearly 1,600 serving as individual augments in both Marine and Joint commands. Of those activated, 71% have served in or are serving in the CENTCOM AOR. Today, Reserve Marines are serving in active combat as part of I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) in Al Anbar Province, Iraq. Our Reserves are also providing personnel for a wide-variety of joint supporting operations and activities, including Iraqi military transition teams, Afghan National Army embedded training teams, civil affairs detachments, and personnel recovery and processing teams. Globally, reserve forces perform anti-terrorist and humanitarian operations in the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan, Central America, and the Caribbean. Our

approach to integrating our Active and Reserve components into a truly capable, operationally focused Total Force Marine Corps has borne fruit in this Long War. Their performance proves that our Total Force is truly "one team, one fight."

We do not see the recent trend toward an "operational reserve" role for the SMCR as being detrimental to a more traditional "strategic" role. Despite the frequency with which we have called on the SMCR since 9/11, we know there is significant untapped depth remaining in the force, and a true eagerness to serve the Nation in war. Existing legal authorities permit the President, if he deems it necessary, to involuntarily activate SMCR and IMA personnel for their full 24-month term rather than the current departmental policy of no more than 12 months of involuntary activation for most units. In addition, we have an Individual Ready Reserve of nearly 58,000 Marines—many with recent active duty experience—that we know have and will continue to faithfully answer the call in a new or expanded emergency.

Active/Reserve Component Mix

In 2004, we conducted an extensive Total Force Structure Review (conducted by the Force Structure Review Group, or FSRG) recommending approximately 15,000 structure changes to improve the Marine Corps Total Force ability to meet the long-term needs of the Global War on Terror and the emerging requirements of the 21st Century. This effort was end strength and structure neutral—offsets to rebalance the Total Force with increases in capabilities for high-demand needs coming from military-to-civilian conversions and the disestablishment and/or reorganization of units with capabilities in low demand. We are currently implementing these changes. Examples include: the

former 8th Tank Battalion (Rochester, NY) transitioned to become the core of an Anti-Terrorism (AT) Battalion (still in Rochester, NY); the number of artillery batteries will be reduced from 15 to 11; and an Intelligence Support Battalion (Mobile, AL) is being formed from existing structure to consolidate reserve intelligence assets.

Today, we are standing up the Capabilities Assessment Group (CAG), which is tasked to take a focused look at our operating forces (active and reserve) in order to ensure we have properly incorporated lessons learned on the battlefield, QDR guidance, and the Marine Component to USSOCOM (MARSOC) standup. We are examining the implications of 2006 QDR Report recommendations to reduce our Active Component (AC) force to 175,000 Marines and to maintain our Reserve Component (RC) at 39,600 by 2012. Our current on-hand AC strength exceeds 180,000, which is a result of SECDEF authorities to approve the AC above our budgeted 175,000. We are grateful for every AC and RC Marine we have right now, with OIF and other contingencies requiring tremendous amounts of manpower this year, particularly in the area of OIF Training Teams and other non-structure billets, and with a number of injured Marines in limited duty status. Our current model has worked well under the stresses of the past few years and has provided much valuable relief to the Active Component Marine Corps. However, adjustments can still be made. The CAG will examine and make recommendations to our future force mix and balance between AC and RC.

Current and Planned Roles and Missions of the Marine Reserve

We continue to believe that our Reserve Component is best used to complement, augment and reinforce the active force in time of contingency operations or war. This

policy has served the Marine Corps and the Nation well, and we feel the policy continues to be appropriate. The 2006 QDR focused on reorienting DoD capabilities and forces to be more agile, better prepared for irregular challenges and to serve as a hedge against uncertainty. Relying on our Marine Corps Reserves is part of our institutional solution to these challenges to our national security. We seek to get the right kind and numbers of reservists, to the right place, at the right time, with the right equipment, for the right mission, to support their active duty counterparts, and then to return home again as soon possible. Despite the demands of new and emerging missions, the USMC must continue to be prepared to respond to the full spectrum of traditional missions from forward presence, to peacekeeping operations, to smaller scale contingencies, to combat operations. The Reserve Components provide units with tremendously capable individuals who augment, enhance, sustain, support, reinforce, and generate Marine Corps forces worldwide, as needed.

We as a Service were able to deliver the early activation and deployment of individuals and units (from Operation DESERT SHIELD / DESERT STORM through Operations ENDURING FREEDOM / IRAQI FREEDOM) with confidence because of our prior investment in quality personnel (both active and reserve) and relevant training and exercise programs in peacetime. We build our SMCR units on a solid foundation of former active-duty commissioned officers, who possess experience that simply cannot be replicated by substitution or by additional training. We then add to that a cadre of Reserve Staff Non-Commissioned Officers that bring exceptional knowledge and stability to SMCR units across the country. Third, we bring thousands of excellent young men and women directly into the Reserve from virtually all civilian walks of life, who

join for the challenge of earning the title "Marine" and the privilege of serving their Nation. Finally, we assign over seven thousand of our most capable Active Component officers and enlisted Marines to serve on the Reserve units' Inspector/Instructor staffs, whose duties include assisting reserve leaders in planning and conducting training, and ensuring the units are prepared for mobilization. We feel this force structure is capable and will continue to be relevant and responsive well into the 21st Century.

Our recent experience with reserve activation policy and practice drives home the importance of building a system that preserves predictable and timely access to reserve capabilities. The progression of the current mobilization reinforces the point that our Reserve force is a precious resource that must be carefully managed to ensure proper employment over a protracted conflict. We have undertaken a series of studies over the last several years to review "roles, missions, functions, and structure" from a Total Force perspective.

A notable change in the role of our Reserve Forces is the designation of the Commander of Marine Forces Reserve and his staff as the Service Component (MARFORNORTH) responsible for supporting U.S. Northern Command. This duty leverages one of the great strengths of the Reserve: its close contact with communities all across the United States. While informal in their nature, the ties that bind our Reserve Marines to their communities provide an invaluable perspective and sensitivity to the concerns of officials at the state and local level, and pay great dividends in times of crisis response at home. By combining both MARFORRES and MARFORNORTH duties in one commander and staff, we have achieved a reasonable balance in the efficient and effective use of headquarters personnel.

As a rule, we believe that the SMCR, with its force structure complementing the active operating force and its traditional "augment and reinforce" mission, has served the Nation well. Our Reserve is wholeheartedly oriented on that mission and keen to do its part in times of peril. However, we are conscious of how changes in key drivers such as the new Force Planning Construct, recent operational employment patterns and service expectations of the members of our Reserve are bound to demand adjustments in Reserve missions and roles.

Issue Priorities and Guiding Policy Principles

Resetting the Total Force

We currently estimate the cost to reset the Marine Corps Total Force will be $11.7 billion. Reset of the Reserve Component is a key priority within this investment initiative. We are currently assessing the impact of gear distribution and reallocation on the overall reset as our Marine units, both Active and Reserve. In the interim, the impact on the training readiness of the Marine Corps Reserve is being mitigated by internal equipment redistributions, as well as by purchasing commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) equipment that will allow Marines to preserve their current skills. Ultimately, our goal for the reset of the Total Force will be to ensure that the Active and Reserve Components of the Marine Corps are ready to respond to the Nation's call in the future.

Activation Policy Issues

From an institutional perspective, the Marine Corps encountered some unexpected challenges sourcing Reserve units in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. Marine Corps planners had assumed for more than a decade the near-immediate availability of

key capabilities resident in whole or in part in SMCR units during times of war. The activation decisions made in the months prior to the commencement of OIF did not support that assumption. What would have normally been the execution of an integrated Time-Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD) became, in effect, a series of separate decisions for activation, integration and deployment. While it did not in the end prevent timely employment of SMCR units in the operation, it interjected a great deal of uncertainty in the personal and family preparation efforts of our SMCR members. We are fortunate that family members and employers exhibited a great deal of understanding and support at that time, and Reserve Marines were able to answer the call with minimal difficulty.

The Marine Corps has no issue with the Reserve activation laws as written. Specifically, we concur with the key provision of the law that provides the true depth to our ability to participate in sustained operations in a Long War: the authority to use the full 24-month activation period allowed to Reservists under the President's Partial Mobilization Authority.

For the initial combat operations phase of OIF, the Marine Corps called up proportionally more of its Reserve Component than any other Service (Army National Guard: 24%; Army Reserve: 33%; Air National Guard: 20%; Air Force Reserve: 21%; Navy Reserve: 13%; Marine Corps Reserve: 48%). Subsequent force rotations since 2003 have demonstrated our continuing reliance on the Marine Corps Reserve for sustained operations. Due to limitations on our ability to use involuntary reactivations beyond one year, MARFORES is required to source units/detachments from pools of

never-activated Marines and volunteers, although it is important to note that all Marines joined to serve as warriors in an all-volunteer Total Force.

Examples from our most recent OIF rotations illustrate the impact of having to source SMCR units without involuntary reactivation authority. First Battalion, Twenty-Fifth Marines (1/25) could have been wholly reactivated in support of OIF 05-07.1; however, without involuntary reactivation authority, 261 Reserve Marines from 2/25 and Headquarters Company, 25th Marines had to be activated to fully man 1/25, thereby requiring essentially two battalions worth of SMCR Marines to make one that can activate and deploy at strength. Activation of additional units/detachments partially mitigates personnel shortages. However, this causes cascading negative effects on sourcing future OIF requirements, erodes cohesion in the sourcing and receiving units, dilutes the mobilization potential of the contributing units, and provides potential for degraded capability. An example of this "domino effect" is evident in the case of 2/25. Two years into 2/25's post-deactivation reconstitution, their sourcing of Marines in support of 1/25's OIF deployment reduced their percent of never-activated Marines from 45% to 21%, delaying reconstitution by over a year. Due to limitations on our ability to use involuntary reactivations, requests for forces which would normally be suited for potential Reserve sourcing may be levied on the Active Component instead, increasing the demands on that part of the Total Force.

Conclusion

The use of the Marine Corps Reserve in a wide variety of operations since Operation DESERT SHIELD / DESERT STORM has demonstrated the soundness of the

Total Force approach to Marine Corps force planning and employment. Recent history has proven that appropriately trained and supported Reserve forces are an invaluable asset. As we confront a future that is unpredictable and chaotic, we keenly appreciate the professionalism, depth and flexibility that our Marine Corps Reserve provides to our response capability.

Our Reserve Marines are fully dedicated to serving and protecting this Nation. They have been "in the fight" far longer than many expected just a few years ago. Their bravery, sacrifice, and commitment to warfighting excellence have added new chapters to our Corps' rich legacy. They recognize they have an essential mission, and that they have the solid backing of the American people. The Marine Corps fully understands that our greatest contribution to the Nation is our high-level of readiness and our undeniable warfighting excellence across the spectrum of conflict. That readiness is predicated upon the sustained support of Congress, with which Marines will continue to be the well-equipped, well-led, and well-trained Total Force of professionals and warriors that the Nation has come to rely on. Marines and their families greatly appreciate the unwavering strong support of Congress and the grateful appreciation of the American people.