

NAVY LEAGUE AWARDS LUNCHEON

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When I took the helm from Tom Moorer, he told me that in his view, there were three primary problems that should become my objectives. The first was, "how to modernize our Navy." The second, "how to get ready to deal with the all-volunteer Navy," as part of the all-volunteer force. And the third, "to do those two while maintaining the Navy's commitment and pressure toward the ending of the war. I'd like to speak briefly how we proceeded under his final admonition. The first, with regard to modernization--you are all aware of the fact that the Navy ended WWII a new fleet in craft numbers, that it was not considered necessary or wise to do throughout the Korean War because we retained a large volume of new ships--that the massive funds required for the Polaris program made it impossible in the post-Korean era to modernize our fleet; and then for the long, long period of the South Vietnam War again, we had to do without. So we face the situation of a Navy built two wars before, running out of steam. The first problem that we had was to maintain our continuing contribution to the Nation's strategic strike capability, by building toward a replacement for the Polaris missile and submarine system, that had made it possible to survive in the 60's, a replacement for the Poseidon inserted in that same hull which had given us our deterrent for the 70's, by the massive funding of the new Trident

Submarine and missile, which increasingly will be the most survivable element of the triad upon which our nation's current strategic power rest. The signing of the SALT agreement which we all welcomed, made it necessary to accelerate the development of this new system to ensure that we stayed ahead of the qualitative race announced by Mr. Breznev when he said they would do everything legal under the agreement to optimize their strategic forces. This year in the budget, there is 1.7 million dollars to complete the research and development and to build the first of the new Trident boats, which will come along in time to begin to replace our aging hull. With regard to the General Purpose Forces, it was necessary for us to go for what has become known as the Hi-Low Mix --the continuation of the series nuclear aircraft carriers, which our Chief so proudly and highly praised, by the funding, beginning last year and completing this year of the CVN- 70 (the fourth nuclear carrier) making it possible for us to have two nuclear carrier task forces parted by each coast ready for rapid reinforcement of our overseas conventionally powered carriers, and continuing the construction of the very costly, but highly effective nuclear attack submarines, which all aid for deterrence in conventional war. And the F-14 aircraft without which it is literally impossible to inspire to retain the control of the seas and without which it is not possible to deal with the increasing cruise missile threat--the threat of mass air raids and the Foxbat, which can fly higher than any other

aircraft missile system we are capable of dealing with, with the exception of the F-14. And as it has been pointed out, in order to meet these commitments it was necessary to increase our ship construction money from less than a billion dollars to four billion dollars per year and in this current fiscal year, for the first time, we are building at greater than replacement rate. In order to retain a number of ships within reach of the Soviet Navy, of which I shall speak of later, it has been necessary to design the low part of that Mix--the Control Frigates, small destroyers, the Sea Control Ship, small flat top, the Hydrofoil Ship and various small craft capable of dealing with the threat in narrow waters and in the out years, the Surface Effect Ship, all ships of lower cost, lesser effectiveness which we can therefore afford in larger numbers. Now the price we have paid for this is, as Tom Morris has pointed out, fearsome. In order to get that plan together to be able to fund the new Navy, we have had--in comparison to our pre-war figure--to reduce our Navy by 49% by the end of the forthcoming fiscal year, nearly cut in half. Our aircraft by 20%, our military personnel by 15%. We have the lowest number of ships in our Navy since about 1937. The second major objective passed on to me would be the achievement of an all-volunteer Navy. The air is clear that the draft would end, the people would have it. It is clear that the Navy's problem in peactime in being competitive with the other service, services, is a fearsome one, the Navy being the only service

which has repeated long tours away from home and family. It was clear that it would be necessary to become competitive with these other services and with civilian life. And this make it necessary for us to provide a new measure of professional talent for our men and women. It made it necessary for us to eliminate many of those old traditions which were merely hurtful rather than contributing to good order and discipline. It made it necessary for us to provide new educational opportunity for our naval personnel and it made it necessary for the Navy to become relevant to the modern age in terms of such mundane things as hair standards and in terms of such important things as the equality of race, color, sex and creed. And it became necessary for us to make major pay raises in order to become competitive with the outside world. Now what are the results with regard to this second objective. First tour reenlistment rate for the Navy has risen from 10% to 17% in the following year to 22% in the next year and running at the present time at the rate of 23%. Second tour reenlistment rate are at an all-time high of 92%. The Navy has the second lowest number of deserters in any of the four services. The second lowest number of absentees of any of the four services. The first or sometime the second best record with regard to lowness of hard-drug usage. We have overcome, as Tom has reported, our tremendous recruiting problem and thanks to the wonderful performance of RADM Emmett Tidd, are meeting our monthly quotas with ever-increasing

quality. With regard to that third objective of ending the war, the first part of this was to continue at an accelerated rate the Vietnamization process. In Europe, U.S. Navy men and women turned over in a period of about twenty months, 1000 small craft, 20 ships, built 40 bases to replace our repair ships, trained the equivalent of a division of technicians, repair, supply and maintenance personnel and the Vietnamese Navy increased its size from 17,000 to 40,000 and turned over the fighting to Vietnam force. And then beginning in March of last year when the massive invasion took place across the DMZ, it was necessary for the Commander-in-Chief to make vantage, courageous and now in after sight the wise decision to deal with this invasion by continuing the Vietnamization process withdrawing our ground, land and air forces and to meet the invasion by an increased B-52 effort out of Guam and by doubling the size of the U.S. Seventh Fleet. So, our forces went from three to six carriers and 25 to 50 destroyers, the Amphibious Forces were dealt with, with supplies, with support and modern ships. And this, as I have suggested earlier from the smallest base ships throughout the entire war. This meant that last year, your average sailor aboard a ship had 85 nights at home. This compares to the 143 holidays and day off that the average civilian had while spending every night at home. These sailors went for a long, long period on the line, no liberty ports during that last ten months with the exception of Subic Bay, because we could not afford to take ships that far away from the line. Our ships

were undermanned, as a result of the catenary in our recruiting efforts of the year before and as a result of fiscal restraints. And it was no longer possible for our sailors to come ashore at the end of their tours because of limitations on the funds to do so. And our Sailors were stacked up in ports unable to go to their next duty station for the same reason. And back home, there was not always a fine degree of popular support for what they were doing. There were during this final period of months three highly publicized episodes of misconduct on board our ships. You should not forget that 99.9% of the officers and men and women in the U.S. Navy gave performance above and beyond the call of duty during that critical year. And as a result of their increasingly more important contribution as the other forces were withdrawn, this long and dreadful war had come to an end and America's heroes have come home with their heads held high. And now we very literally appeared to have entered the eye of the storm having mothered those ferocious winds. What lies ahead. Again as Tom has pointed out, we are contributing the smallest percentage of our gross national product since 1950 to defense. The smallest fraction of the Federal Budget since 1950, to defense. The smallest number of military personnel, since 1950 to defense. The Congress of the United States has cut the President's defense budget in the last three fiscal years by two billion, three billion and five billions of dollars, and will undoubtedly cut it by more in the year ahead.

This is the year in which the Soviet Navy which has always had well over twice as many submarines as have we, forges ahead of the U.S. Navy in total numbers of surface combatant ships. We dropped from 229 to 179 as part of our annual process of reduction of an average of 60 to 65 ships, as inflation and budget cuts take their inevitable toll and the Soviets have surged to 212. So, this is the year that the proud U.S. Navy falls behind in what has always been its number one position. The question, of course, is will we, in the face of these kinds of defense budget, be able to maintain the pace with the potential threat of a potential adversary. There, I suggest to you that the tremendous success that President Nixon has demonstrated with regard to _____ with the PRC and his trip to Peking, with regard to the _____ with the Soviet Union and the trip to Moscow, with regard to the urging series of economic and trade arrangements, with regard to SALT I recently completed and SALT II, hopefully to be completed in the months and years ahead, that all his progress was possible because the U.S. had a superiority in military strength. And the question of whether or not we will be able to continue this kind of progress as we become number two is _____ whether or not we fall behind rests upon you, the people. I believe that there is within this Nation the same kind of demonstrated will and intense patriotism that you have seen displayed before you today in the terms of these leaders particularly our wonderful prisoners of war and their wives. I suggest possibly we rally that kind of leadership.