

Remarks by the Director of National Intelligence  
Ambassador John D. Negroponte

Marine Corps Intelligence Association, Inc.  
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Thank you for that very kind introduction, Tony. It's a pleasure to be here with you, and I am grateful to the Marine Corps Intelligence Association for the opportunity to speak to you this evening.

Marine Corps Intelligence is a key element of the United States Intelligence Community. Under the superb leadership of Brigadier General Richard Lake and Assistant Director Michael Decker, the men and women of Marine Corps intelligence greatly contribute to the nation's intelligence capabilities. The support shown here tonight and the list of award winners is a testament to the excellence displayed by Intelligence Marines.

As a former ambassador, I have a special place in my heart for the Marines. Many Marines out there have kept my colleagues and me safe through the years, and it is a debt that I am pleased to acknowledge. The Marine security guard program is a proud tradition that not only protects our embassies in some far away places—it also keeps embassy life lively with after-hours drills, weekend softball, and, of course, the annual Marine Ball. (Applause)

On my last tour overseas in Iraq, of course, the Marines were doing a lot more than keeping the embassy safe.

The duty Marines pulled in places like Fallujah, Ramadi, Al Asad, Ar Rutbah and in smaller outposts on the Syrian border was—and remains—very hard and dangerous service. Those of us here tonight know that many Marines, sailors, soldiers, airmen and civilians have been wounded and lost their lives in patriotic service to our country. Of those totals, over fifty Intelligence Marines have been wounded and seven Intelligence Marines have made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq.

We are here tonight to honor dedication, sacrifice, and leadership. We also are here because we all know, first hand, that intelligence is critical to our nation's defense. Whether it is alerting the warfighter on patrol to a potential ambush, or ensuring that law enforcement is positioned to break up a terrorist cell, intelligence is essential to prevent surprise.

Tragically, our nation was surprised on that morning of September 11<sup>th</sup> almost exactly five years ago. While the surprise and shock is seared in our memories, the innovative reply of the American people came swiftly and without hesitation.

For example, one of your own, retired Master Gunnery Sergeant Edwin T. Vogt, who is present with us this evening, answered the call immediately. Master Gunnery Sergeant Vogt, who was a reserve Marine in New York but not on duty at the time, rushed to the scene of the attack and organized a team of fellow Marines to help in the rescue effort for several days. Master Gunnery Sergeant Vogt's response epitomized improvisation. Because he did not have his uniform, he went to the closest Army surplus store, purchased one, and headed to Ground Zero. For his leadership, Master Gunnery Sergeant Vogt was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal. (Applause)

In the same spirit that Master Gunnery Sergeant Vogt rushed into the fray to rescue his fellow Americans, members of our constantly improving Intelligence Community have deployed to places such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and elsewhere to work with our foreign partners in pursuit of both those who planned 9/11 and those who seek to inflict further mass-casualty attacks. Galvanized by the events of 9/11, the Community immediately launched innovative interagency operations partnering with foreign and unconventional allies. This led to the quick overthrow of the Taliban and the capture of hundreds of al-Qa'ida operatives. These operations, almost always involving a combination of human and technical intelligence collection, require a great deal of skill and risk, much of which will and should remain secret.

My role as Director of National Intelligence is to take and expand this spirit of innovation and further infuse it into the way we do our intelligence business. Tonight, I would like to discuss not just how we are making our nation safer from terror but also how we are supporting our military forces engaged in the fight.

Five years after 9/11 the question many have on their mind is whether our nation's Intelligence Community is better prepared to keep America safe? My answer to this question is yes and here is why. First, we understand and are better aligned to meet the terrorist threat, and second, we are sharing information better, thus increasing our opportunities to thwart terrorist operations.

I won't claim that we have, over the past five years, perfected the art of counterterrorism. What we have done, as illustrated by some of our successes, is vastly improve the Intelligence Community's ability to understand, and disrupt, organizations like al-Qa'ida. For example we have several times as many "all source" analysts focusing on the terrorist threat than were in place on 9/11. We also have devoted a great deal more resources to increasing our human intelligence collection. This is real, tangible progress. It represents better collection, better analysis, and better support for our leaders, which will lead to an increased understanding of how to combat our terrorist foes. And everyone has had a hand in these successes, from the DIA to the NSA to the CIA, to the FBI, and of course to the service intelligence entities.

Of course, intelligence does little good if those who need it don't see it. As current events show in Great Britain and Iraq, the right people are increasingly seeing the right information. Intelligence allowed Coalition forces to locate and kill Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. Extensive intelligence sharing and collaboration between British, American, and Pakistani authorities enabled the shut down of a cell seeking to blow up transatlantic airliners.

Such cooperation and information sharing is essential in counterterrorism operations, and it is particularly important to how we are improving our support to the warfighter—in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other fronts in the war on terror.

The first point I would like to make on warfighter support is very basic, but so important that it cannot be overemphasized. The distinction between national and tactical level intelligence is blurring. In asymmetric, low-intensity conflict zones, everyone has an intelligence mission. The eyes and ears of the populace, and the eyes and ears of our troops on the ground, often provide intelligence that cannot be obtained otherwise. The Marines are famous for insisting that, “every Marine is a rifleman.” I understand that as a result of lessons learned in Iraq, Marine leaders now are also insisting, “every Marine is an intelligence collector.” So I am not telling you something you do not already know. I just want to acknowledge a crucial dimension of the intelligence challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Having said that, I would like to emphasize that my office has been working closely with our DoD colleagues to adapt and improve our national intelligence systems to support the warfighter on the ground and to limit the advantages the enemy enjoys in asymmetric warfare.

In the realm of information sharing, I would highlight three initiatives particularly relevant to you and your fellow Marines.

First, we are working closely with the Department of Defense’s newly established Joint Intelligence Operations Centers (JIOCs) to ensure real-time, transparent information exchange. The DNI representatives to the combatant commands, along with representatives from all agencies in the Intelligence Community, are committed to streamlining and improving information sharing at national, operational, and tactical levels.

Second, Intelligence Community agencies such as NSA and CIA are providing more direct support to Marines in the field. Whether it is integrating computer networks to allow for the greater use of classified databases or co-locating Intelligence Community officers at places such as Camp Fallujah, we are working to find more ways to ensure information is actionable and at the fingertips of the Marines who need it.

Third, we have made some real breakthroughs in sharing more information with our allies. Obviously, this is critical to coordination and force protection in conflict zones. The fact is that we don’t fight alone, and we have to ensure that those we fight alongside us have the intelligence they need to be effective partners.

A moment ago I stressed that in a counterinsurgency everyone has an intelligence mission. Marine Human Exploitation Teams in particular have justly earned a reputation for their aggressiveness in collecting and exploiting tactical intelligence. But beyond what a patrol might bring back as useful tactical intelligence, we also need to systematically build up, improve, and coordinate the United States Government human intelligence function in general. We therefore have created the National Clandestine Service within the CIA, whose role is to set standards for, to facilitate the training of, and to ensure that we deconflict and integrate the activities of our human intelligence collectors worldwide. Your fellow Marine, Major General Michael E.

Ennis—who is with us this evening—is the National Clandestine Service, Deputy Director for Community Human Intelligence, which means he is largely responsible for integrating human intelligence collection across agencies. The National Clandestine Service, with the support of my office, will continue to work hard to guarantee that the information collected at the tactical level is integrated with national level intelligence and vice versa.

Improvised Explosive Devices provide another example of our efforts to use intelligence resources against tactical threats of strategic significance. IEDs are cheap, easy to build, difficult to detect, and of course they are deadly. So the Intelligence Community has worked hard with the Department of Defense, particularly the new Joint IED Defeat Organization and other agencies of the United States Government, to develop ways to detect and disable IEDs. This effort has had some success, but we have to do better. We also have to attack the human networks that make and traffic in IEDs and we are working hard on that question as well.

I can say very little publicly about the specifics of our signals intelligence capabilities. Suffice it to say that both modern technology and the nature of the counterinsurgency and counterterrorist enemy have rendered the clear-cut distinctions between “strategic” and “tactical” signals intelligence obsolete. In that context, it is widely recognized that Marine radio battalions have set the standard for breaking down old barriers between national and tactical collectors and analysts.

By working closely together, then, and capitalizing on real-time, real-life, real-combat lessons learned, the Intelligence Community and its partners can unmask dangerous adversaries who are masters of deception. We have embedded intelligence analysts in Marine bases for just that reason. We are developing an “expeditionary” mentality in the field of science and technology. And of course, as I have emphasized, we understand the vital role of human intelligence when attempting to penetrate shifting networks of non-state actors whose lack of orthodoxy is a weakness which they seek to transform into a strength.

Ultimately, as in the early days of our Republic, our own strength lies in America’s ability to innovate, integrate, adapt and unify. Different elements of our national security establishment have different roles, but the overall mission—for intelligence, for the Marines, for our diplomats, for our border patrol, and police—is one-in-the-same: preventing surprise, keeping America safe, and protecting our citizens, our values, our interests, and our allies.

This a demanding job; in defeating terror, we will be at it a long time in a long war, but I think that we—particularly those of you among us who can proudly call themselves Marines—do it well.

Before I close I would like to speak to you about one more item that is not specific to the Marine Corps. The topic does, however, share a common trait with those who wear the Globe and Anchor, for it involves an activity that is central to protecting our nation in the war on terror. I am speaking of the CIA’s detention and questioning of key terrorists.

As the President announced yesterday, over the past several years the CIA has detained and questioned a small number of high-value terrorists. The need for this kind of capability is clear:

when terrorists are judged to have information critical to the security of the United States, we must be able to question them in a safe and professional manner in order to prevent a repetition of such catastrophic events as occurred on 9/11. And the safeguards against impropriety are thorough: questioning is consistent with United States law, subject to congressional oversight, and scrutinized by the Department of Justice.

Others have noted how invaluable the intelligence garnered through the questioning of detained terrorists is. As last year's bipartisan Robb-Silberman WMD Commission concluded, "one source of critical intelligence, particularly with respect to terrorist plans and operations involving the use of nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons, is the interrogation of captured detainees." I, too, can tell you that detainee information has vastly improved our understanding of terrorists' networks, their linkages, and—most importantly—their ongoing plots.

These are not theoretical claims. Because of the CIA questioning of 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the US government and our allies disrupted an al-Qa'ida plot to attack the West Coast of the United States, possibly using airplanes. In addition, CIA questioning proved vital to unraveling a key cell in South Asia, and led to the disruption of plots in London, Karachi, the Arabian Gulf, and, of course, the United States. And of special relevance tonight the questioning of detainees uncovered an al-Qa'ida plot to attack Marines in Djibouti, on the Horn of Africa. All of this we achieved through practices that are safe, and which comply with our Constitution, our laws, and our treaty obligations.

The President's announcement yesterday does shine light on the CIA in a manner to which it—and the rest of the Intelligence Community—is not accustomed. But it also provides an opportunity, for it highlights to the world the invaluable service of men and women within the United States Intelligence Community who would, otherwise, labor to protect our nation—and our allies—anonously. And in this regard, I want to take this opportunity not only to thank all of you for your service, but also to thank those men and women of the CIA who have worked so hard, in this and other ways, to keep our nation from suffering another tragedy like 9/11.

Thank you again for having me as your speaker. God bless each and every one of you. Thank you.