

**OFFICE OF  
THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS**

**HOST EVENING PARADE WITH GUEST OF HONOR SENATOR CARL  
LEVIN**

**REMARKS BY  
GENERAL JAMES F. AMOS,  
COMMANDANT,  
U.S. MARINE CORPS**

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(Applause.)

GENERAL JOHN AMOS: Well, thank you.

I am making my way to the back just a little bit ago. And when I walked in here it was nice and sunny outside. And all of a sudden, it got real dark out there. So – but I'm an optimist. It never rains at Eighth and I. (Laughter.)

And so we'll have to see what's happening out there. I'm almost afraid to look. But we're glad you're here tonight. Mr. and Mrs. Ambassador, it's good to have you here.

Tonight we are going to honor a great American patriot, a – probably one of the best friends of the Department of Defense, which means best friends of our men and women who wear this uniform and our families, chairman, and senator, Carl Levin.

He's here with his wife, Barbara. They are going to celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. Now, is it – have you done it yet this year? It's this year, right – 50 years together and she just put up with – (laughter) – all his guff, and all the – and everything with dealing with working as a public servant. And Barbara, thank you for your faithful service to your country through your husband. And God bless you. And happy anniversary. (Applause.)

You know, when you're a young Marine – a young lieutenant and captain – you're just living in the now. You're not paying a lot of attention to what's happening at the higher levels of the Marine Corps. You're not paying a lot of attention to what's happening in Washington, DC. You're just deployed. You're out doing the nation's bidding as a youngster. And as you get a little bit older, you begin to understand that your real support base comes from those men and women that serve in Congress in this great city that we're in tonight.

The Marine Corps in particular, probably more than any other service, owes its existence to Congress. It was Congress in 1950 that reiterated and said, OK, we are going to have a Marine Corps. It will have three divisions and three wings. And this was at a period of time in our nation when we had come out of World War II and there was a significant drawdown of our military forces. And the Marine Corps's future – its very future – was in jeopardy.

And it was Congress that stepped up and said – as good as the Marine Corps had done for our nation, as many good things during the war, there were folks in Washington that were willing to say farewell to the Marine Corps. And it was Congress that stepped up and said, not so fast. So I've got a warm spot in my heart as I've become more senior. And, certainly of late, I understand that it's our friends in Congress, both in the Senate and the House, that care for us so deeply and care for our families and our men and women in uniform.

It was about seven months ago that I sat in front of Chairman Levin, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. I never thought I would do that. But I did. And it was my confirmation hearing. And I have to tell you that I took the easy way out. I brought my grandson Charlie, who you've seen up here, and I sat him right behind my wife and I. And hoping that the chairman and the Senate Armed Services Committee would be easy on me. And they were. (Laughter.)

And it was – it's hard to say it was a wonderful hearing, but it was a – but somehow I passed it – (laughter) – Chairman. I passed the test, and you confirmed me to be the 35<sup>th</sup> commandant on the Marine Corps, sir.

And it's an honor to have you here. You know, you begin – the other thing that happens, after you begin to understand who really cares for our nation's military. You also then begin to look at those great American patriots who are in Congress. And you look for those statesmen. You look for those statesmen the likes of which John Warner and Mike Mansfield of Montana, Russell Long, Lloyd Benson of Texas. And as I look around – and I look both in the Senate and the House side of that – there are few and far between.

And I will tell you that the man who we are honoring tonight, at the second parade of the season, Chairman Carl Levin, is a great American statesman. And he's a patriot. He's a friend of all our young men and women. Senator, I'm proud to have you up here. It's an honor for Marine Barracks, Washington. Washington, you've been here before. But it's an honor for me as your commandant, and in terms of – responsible for 240,000 Marines and families – to honor you this way tonight. It's going to be a wonderful evening.

Chairman, please come up. And I have a gift for you.

(Pause.)

Chairman, there is no more precious symbol that represents our great – our nation's great Marine Corps than the eagle, globe and anchor. This has been a favorite of mine since the first time I saw this rendition of it. It's made of crystal. And it has on the bottom – it says, "Presented to the Honorable Carl Levin of the United States Senate by General James F. Amos, 35<sup>th</sup> Commandant of the Marine Corps."

Chairman, on behalf of all Marines and their family members everywhere, thank you for being our senior senator and for taking such good care of us.

(Applause.)

(END)