

# **Office of the Commandant of the Marine Corps**

**Marine Barracks Washington Evening Parade  
Guest of Honor, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus**

**General James F. Amos  
Commandant  
United States Marine Corps**

**May 4, 2012**

GENERAL JAMES F. AMOS: Hey, folks. You're going to have to get a hell of a lot more excited out there; it's Dudsville out there on me tonight.

Look, we're pleased you're here. This is -- We had a parade last week and it's a kick off parade and it's the one what we call "Friends and Family" so it's the family and the friends of the barracks. It's the people who live around 8<sup>th</sup> and I here, the businesses so it was all those folks. So it was a practice. That way if we goon something up, it was kept within the family. I will tell you, I think this is my fourth of fifth parade season, I've never seen it, even at the end of the season, go as well as it did last Friday. So no pressure, Colonel Montanus, but the Marines hit it out of the ballpark last Friday and so you're in for a real treat tonight. There was a little bit of rumbling around out there with the weather and all the hand wringers were wringing their hands, but we are stalwart and strident and there will be a parade tonight. It will not rain on Marine Barracks Washington, so just bear with me, okay. Feel the energy and -- we're going to have a wonderful evening tonight. So this really is the kick off of the official season here at Marine Barracks Washington.

You know, the parades began in 1934, the Sunset Parades, up at the War Memorial, excuse me, not the War Memorial, but here and then when we got the War Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and then we moved the Sunset Parades up there and then in 1957 we started what we call here the Evening Parade, which is what you're going to participate in tonight. So it's a tradition, it's one of those proud symbols of the Marine Corps. And all of us that live and work around here and every Marine that's going to pass through here on his or her way out to the Fleet Marine Force, understands that this is sort of home plate. This is one of those sacred areas that really is hallowed ground because when people around in and around our Nation's Capitol think of the Marine Corps, they'll pick their paper up and they'll see them in the Helmand Province or they'll see them in overseas in the western Pacific, but the truth of the matter is around Washington D.C., they'll think of Marine Barracks Washington. They'll think of those great looking young men and women wearing their blue whites that are out in the streets, those that greeted you tonight, so this is a sacred place. I'm privileged to live here with my wife. Colonel Montanus is raising his two boys here with his lovely wife, so welcome back here.

Secretary Mabus is our guest of honor tonight. This is his--- he's just about completed his third year as our Secretary of the Navy -- and I'll tell you, if you look at his cufflinks they look an awful lot like mine with a great big eagle, globe, and anchor on them and if you take a look at his lovely wife, Miss Lynn, Lynn will you raise your hand please? She has a U.S. Marine Corps pin on and both the Secretary and I were commenting that we probably married way up. (laughter) And that's the First Lady of the Marine Corps, Bonnie Amos, who's standing over there yelling "Amen!" (applause)

Ladies and gentlemen, Secretary Mabus took the helm of the Department of the Navy three years ago and I'll tell you, when you think about all that's happened since then. Besides, in addition to combat operations, he's been a Secretary in a time of war, around the war, but also a time of great challenges. We're all affiliated with the fiscal challenges across our country, all the things that our nation's doing and he has been a steady hand on the tiller. He has become my secret weapon in Washington D.C. I mean I'm definitely honest with him when I say, Mr. Secretary, I need your help on this baby and he knows exactly who to talk to and I'll tell you

what, he's one of the best friends of the United States Marine Corps. Former governor of Mississippi, youngest governor of Mississippi at 39 years old, that was just about two years ago. (Laughter) The chairman's Chief Executive Officer of a Corporation in Mississippi and then when all that was done and state auditor for Mississippi, which would be like being the IG, or Inspector General, for the state of Mississippi. You know, some people love you, most people hate you, but it's a really important job. He did that and then he became the governor. And after all of that, President Clinton appointed him as the Ambassador of Saudi Arabia. So when he travels to the Middle East, and he just got back just about a week ago from visiting armories out in the front lines, out in the most dangerous spots of all the Helmand Province, which is probably the most dangerous place in the face of the Earth. Without fear of himself, he jumped into an MV-22, flew up there, met with our Marine special operators, and was out and about in some really bad guy territory. He's got a steady hand on the tiller; sir, it's a pleasure for me to be your 35th Commandant and I know I speak on behalf of my running mate, John Greenert, Chief of Naval Operations, it's a pleasure to have you as our Secretary of the Navy. Ladies and gentlemen, Ray Mabus, Semper Fidelis.

(END)