

Remarks by the Honorable Ray Mabus
Humphreys Building Dedication
Navy Yard, Washington, DC
Monday, April 20, 2015

CNO, thank you so much. Thank all of you for being here today.

I got to see the memorial to our fallen on the way in here today, and so I want to talk a little bit about the past and a lot about the future and how they intersect, because 19 months ago we lost 12 shipmates, members of our Navy family, in an evil and never-to-be-understood act. And that day, now almost two years ago, our thoughts focused on the pain and the emptiness, but immediately after that awful event we were overwhelmed with kindness. Members of TAPS, Navy League, the Washington Nationals, and people from everywhere very selflessly and immediately reached out. We were comforted by people at their very best at the very worst time.

Now, Vice Admiral Hilarides and Admiral Greenert have already thanked you, but we cannot thank you – as organizations, as individuals – enough. Your continued support has helped us to heal, and you have strengthened the Navy and Marine Corps family. And if you weren't a part of it before, you are a part of that family now. And we can't forget the most vivid, the most moving and the bravest actions came from those who worked here that awful day, and who returned to work the next day and the next and the next and the next until today to make sure that the critical, irreplaceable mission of this place and these people not interrupted.

So we're here today as an act of continuity and renewal, to dedicate this building. And in doing so, we look at our Navy traditions. This building houses an organization that can fairly be described as the keel of the Navy, the place where our ships conceived, designed. And as you've heard over and over, it's very fitting that this building is named for Joshua Humphreys, who designed those first six frigates of our Navy in the 1790s. We recognize him, as we should, for those ships he designed and built – those ships that fought so well. But more importantly, we honor his legacy – a tradition of excellence across the generations, a legacy that is expanded in this building right here every day.

I want to thank grand-to-the-fourth son and other members of the Humphreys family and the crew of Old Ironsides, for joining us here today. We welcome you, and we thank you for preserving Joshua Humphreys' legacy and helping us honor the 12 who followed that legacy, who dedicated their lives and ultimately gave their lives in service. Those 12, like Joshua Humphreys, will inspire future generations and sustain the unbroken chain of patriots who have served our Navy and our nation.

Uniquely, the Navy and Marine Corps provide America with presence – presence around the globe and around the clock. And that presence is born from the labors of the people in this building, producing ships capable of triumph no matter what comes over

the horizon, and making the Navy and Marine Corps the most formidable expeditionary fighting force in history.

So in keeping with Navy tradition, the traditional commissioning of any naval vessel, God bless the Humphreys Building, and all those who work in it and all those who worked before. You who work here are the epitome of Semper Fortis, Forever Courageous, and Semper Fidelis, Forever Faithful. Thank you.