



29 November 2000

Dear Mr. Weldon,

I was delighted to have received a copy of your vision for the House Armed Services Committee and am pleased to be afforded an opportunity to provide some thoughts on your proposed changes.

Our ascendancy to superpower status in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century resulted from the integration of our military, economic, cultural, diplomatic, and technological capabilities. As we step into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we find ourselves in a rare situation in that while our Nation has interests that span the globe, it also has the resources and talent to support those interests. Our ability to sustain and improve our position will rest squarely on the priority we place on resourcing a national security framework that fully integrates all elements of national power.

I believe the Nation needs to move beyond traditional thinking with regard to military forces and their contribution to national defense. America's military Services are critical contributors to national security in the broadest, and most fundamental, sense. The holistic approach to national security matters outlined in your "vision" is essential to ensure we do not under-represent the contributions, or under-resource the capabilities, of our military forces. Gaps in a strategic security framework often create power vacuums that are usually filled by entities inimical to our interests. Proper attention to, and resourcing of, our National security requirements will ensure such gaps do not occur.

If implemented, your recommendations for better management of requirements, resources, and planning will have a dramatic impact on our ability to truly support a long-term view. Currently, we often find ourselves confronting "20-year threats" via a "six-year defense program, managed by three-year personnel, attempting to develop a two year budget that is funded by a one year appropriation." This situation often handicaps our best efforts to prepare for the future. Your plan to coordinate efforts within the government, as well as with industry and the media, to gain more effective oversight through life-cycle management and visibility, and to utilize liaisons to engender more effective and responsive work on security issues will go a long way to improving this situation.

The Marine Corps has also realized the potential of outreach programs, such as you have addressed. In addition to our traditional fellowship programs, the Corps has implemented a Year Out Program, whereby select Marine Corps officers are placed with innovative commercial corporations to gain insights into better business practices while also reinforcing our connection to American society.

Three items on your list of legislative priorities particularly caught my attention. The creation of a National Operations and Analysis Hub will generate greater awareness among Members of the House regarding the contributions of the military Services to the security posture of our Nation. Your emphasis on quality of life issues will directly impact our ability to recruit and retain the "best and brightest." Lastly, oversight of defense

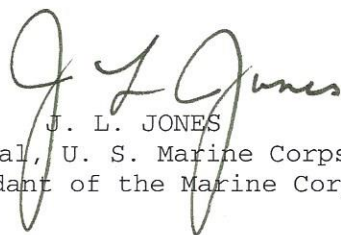
spending will facilitate earnest debate on the capabilities needed for National security, leading to judicious use of precious resources.

I was heartened to see your inclusion of Marine Corps aviation within the Sea Power Subcommittee. The Corps is absolutely committed to an integrated, combined arms approach to warfare. In utilizing this approach, the Marine Corps provides forces that are inherently versatile, agile, and immediately responsive—with the broadest array of capabilities—to address emergent crises.

The Marine Corps is ready to support your efforts to inform and educate Members of Congress not serving on defense-related committees. Our Office of Legislative Affairs has been, and will continue to be, very proactive in offering opportunities for Members to visit and interact with Marines of all ranks—both in academic and training settings and in operational environments with forces forward deployed.

Your vision and accompanying strategy for the House Armed Services Committee are exciting propositions well suited to the emerging demands of a new millennium. The Marine Corps stands at-the-ready to support the HASC, the House of Representatives, and the Congress at-large in any way we can.

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "J. L. Jones". The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and is positioned above the printed name and title.

J. L. JONES  
General, U. S. Marine Corps  
Commandant of the Marine Corps

The Honorable Curt Weldon  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0000