

(At the head table)

The US Senior Defense Official/Defense Attache Colonel and Mrs Timothy Burke

Representing the Chief of the General Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff Major General and Mrs Slawomir Dygnatowski

Director of the American Chamber of Commerce, Mr and Mrs Roman Rewald

President of International Technology Sourcing, Mr Alon Redlich

Our guest Speaker, Colonel John O'Hey

Warsaw Marine Security Guard Detachment Commander, Gunnery Sergeant Christopher Marshall and Mrs. Marshall

(In Audience)

The commander of the Polish Air Force, Lieutenant General and Mrs Lech Majewski

Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Vice Admiral Waldemar Gluszko

Commander of the 16th Mechanized Division, Major General Boguslaw Samol

Commander of Land Forces Training School, Major General Pawel Lamla

Commander of the 25th Air Mobile, Brigadier General Dariusz Wronski

Commander of Military Intelligence, Brigadier General Radoslaw Kujawa

Commander of Counter-Intelligence Agency, Brigadier General Maciej Hunia

Dean of the Warsaw Attache Association, Colonel and Mrs Carsten Rasmussen

Distinguished guests, ladies, gentlemen, I am honored to be here this evening to celebrate this, the 235th anniversary of the founding of the United States Marine Corps.

Each year around the world we gather together to honor the brave men and women of the Marine Corps.....who since November 10, 1775, have served their country with uncommon valor and distinction. Each year we renew our commitment to these men and women. We honor and recall in sorrow their sacrifices. We remember the fallen. We rejoice in their victories. And for all this we say thank you.

Today, our brave Marines continue fighting with honor and bravery in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Marine motto is Semper Fidelis Always Faithful. Courage, Honor and Integrity are synonymous with being a Marine. We are proud of our Marines here in Warsaw.

Each of them represents the best of the Marine Corps and its hallowed traditions. We are far from the fields of battle here, of course, and we can be thankful for that. But in this turbulent world we are never far from danger. I want to thank you for everything you do for the US Embassy and American community here in Warsaw, Poland.

On evenings, weekends, and holidays, whenever an American is in trouble and calls Embassy Warsaw, the first person he or she speaks with is a dedicated Marine who gathers the vital information and makes contact with the Embassy duty officer.

I want to specifically thank and recognize Warsaw's Marine Security Guard Detachment over the last year:

Gunnery Sergeant Christopher Marshall- Savannah, Ga.

Sergeant Sambo Phoeuk- Philadelphia, Pa.

Sergeant Stevenson- El Paso, Tx.

Sergeant Daniel John- Houston, Tx.

Corporal Sammy Smith- Coos Bay, Or.

Corporal Serguei Sarytchev- Los Angeles, Ca.

Corporal Maria Cook- Minneapolis, Mn.

You are each valued members of the Embassy community. I thank each of you for your service to your country and to Embassy Warsaw.

At this time, I am honored to read a message to you from Secretary of State Hillary Clinton:

Major General Frank E. Lowe, US Army, once said:

“The safest place in Korea was right behind a platoon of Marines.”
And I say the most secure place in Warsaw, Poland is the US Embassy for exactly the same reason. Thank you.