

Amos talks about challenges ahead for Marine Corps with USAWC audience

Staff Sgt. Corey Baltos, USAWC Public Affairs

Amos talks about challenges ahead for Marine Corps with USAWC audience

What will the Marine Corps look like when the war in Afghanistan is over? How will the fiscal realities of the next five years affect the Corps? And what types of wars will they fight? These were the topics that Gen. James Amos, the 35th Commandant of the Marine Corps, discussed with the Army War College student body in Bliss Hall on March 22.

This is Amos' first trip to the Army War College since becoming Commandant in October.

Amos, provided an update on what kind of world the Marine Corps and the military in general will be operating in over the next 20 years, a world that would, do to financial and other matters, require the Corps to focus on what missions will need to have done, instead of what missions we would like to do," said Amos.

Amos referred to the recently published, "Report of the 2010 Marine Corps Force Structure Review Group" in his speech when he spoke about the increase in instability and conflict, due to poverty, competition for resources, urbanization, overpopulation and extremism," said Amos. He said that this type of environment would demand a flexible, adaptable, and versatile military forces that is ready and capable of being forward-deployed and forward-engaged.

He also spoke of the importance that the "middle weight" Marine Corps would play in future combat operations, a force that is light enough to get there quickly, but heavy enough to carry the day upon arrival, and cable of operating independent of local infrastructure.

Amos also spoke briefly on the current operations in Afghanistan. He spoke of walking through the streets of Sangin, Afghanistan with Command Sgt. Maj. Carlton Kent, the Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps, and seeing not just old men welcoming them and pressing bread and other treats in their hands, but young men smiling at their arrival.

Amos also warned the audience that as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are winding down, the Marine Corps, like the Army, would face personnel cutbacks.

There are currently 17 Marines in the Class of 2011, most of who were in the audience. Marine Lt. Col. Shane Conrad, said that he was impressed with Amos' remarks.

“In the 20 years that I have been in the Corps, I don't think that I have met a commander who could speak as candidly about the mission as the Commandant.”

David Bennett, the department of command leadership and management events coordinator, who spent eight years in the Marine Corps, said he admired the Commandant's ability to have a single focused message on the purpose of the Marine Corps. “As a very small service the Marine Corps works very hard on Capitol Hill and Madison Ave. to remind the public who they are and what they do. The Commandant's message focus's that very well because his message is inspirational, it reminds us of our values and our history, and more importantly it reminds senior leaders to have the same message for those around them. His message reminds us that we are, ‘The Few, the proud, the Marines.’”

U.S. Army War College Archives - News Article - 23 March 2011