

Vice President Mike Pence: 'Your Commander in Chief Is Proud of You'

With President Donald Trump in Europe to attend the G7 summit, Vice President Mike Pence—whose son is a Marines Corps officer—spoke at the Naval Academy commencement on Friday.

As only a military parent could, the vice president spoke with a great deal of pride for the men and women who were about to take their oaths of office as ensigns and 2nd lieutenants. And, he conveyed to them that their commander in chief was proud of them, too.

"Now it's your turn to assume the watch," he said. "Remember it's not just America that your predecessors are protecting. Think today of what the world owes the United States Navy and Marine Corps.

"Here at the Navy-Marine Corps Stadium, these stands are emblazoned top to bottom with the names of lands and seas that were consecrated by the sacrifice of the American sailor and Marine. I see Belleau Wood, where Marines charged the enemy six times to win the day and defend the freedom of Western Europe. I see the Battle of the Atlantic, the many battles of the Pacific—the Coral Sea, Midway, Leyte Gulf—when the Navy rolled back the tide of tyranny that had engulfed so much of the Asian Pacific. I see Inchon in Korea and the Mekong Delta in Vietnam. I see Iraq and Afghanistan, where to this very day, at this very hour, your brothers and sisters in arms stand strong and courageous in defense of liberty.

"In between the places engraved on these stands, I see all that the Navy and Marine Corps have done and continue to do, day in and day out, to foster peace and prosperity on the seven seas, to distant lands, to keep the shores of America

safe from all who would dare threaten us. The truth is that today you'll become leaders in the world's greatest force for good: the armed forces of the United States of America.

"All of you who do so are patriots—heroes all. You're the pride of your family, and you're the pride of the American people. There's not an American across this country who wouldn't like to have the view that I have today. It's very inspiring. You're from the rest of us, but you're the best of us. And you'll leave this place and enter a world in desperate need of the honor, courage and commitment that defines the leadership that you learned here.

"So, a few words of admonition. Trust your training and the principles you learned here and you'll have success in your career and for your country. Remember that character is destiny. Be men and women of integrity. People follow people they trust.

"I truly believe that among the most important qualities of leadership—whether it's in the armed forces or any other endeavor—are humility, orientation to authority and self-control. And I encourage you to cultivate these qualities as leaders in increasing measure every day, from this day forward."

You can watch the vice president's entire speech in the video clip above. {eo}