Presentation of
The George F. Kennan Award
for Distinguished Public Service
To
U.S. Director of National Intelligence
Ambassador John D. Negroponte

The Waldorf Astoria
December 7, 2006
Our Mission

The National Committee on American Foreign Policy was founded in 1974 by Professor Hans J. Morgenthau and others. It is a nonprofit activist organization dedicated to the resolution of conflicts that threaten U.S. interests. Toward that end, the National Committee identifies, articulates, and helps advance American foreign policy interests from a nonpartisan perspective within the framework of political realism.

American foreign policy interests include

- preserving and strengthening national security;
- supporting countries committed to the values and the practice of political, religious, and cultural pluralism;
- improving U.S. relations with the developed and developing worlds;
- advancing human rights;
- encouraging realistic arms-control agreements;
- curbing the proliferation of nuclear and other unconventional weapons;
- promoting an open and global economy.

Believing that an informed public is vital to a democratic society, the National Committee offers educational programs that address security challenges facing the United States and publishes a variety of publications, including its bimonthly journal, American Foreign Policy Interests, that present keen analyses of all aspects of American foreign policy.
In Tribute
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 16, 2006

I send greetings to those gathered for the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service Dinner hosted by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. Congratulations to Ambassador John Negroponte on receiving this prestigious award.

Over the course of his career, John has served at both the State Department and the White House, represented our country in eight nations spanning three continents, and distinguished himself as an exceptional public servant. He holds the honor of being our Nation's first Ambassador to a free Iraq and the first Director of National Intelligence. At this critical time in the history of freedom, he is leading a unified intelligence community as it reforms and adapts to the challenges of the 21st century. This award is a fitting tribute to John's wisdom, leadership, and integrity and to his many contributions to our Nation.

I appreciate John Negroponte, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, and all those who work to build a safer future for our citizens. Your efforts help strengthen our country and promote mutual understanding among nations.

Laura and I send our best wishes to John, Diana, and the entire Negroponte family on this special occasion.
November 2, 2006

Dear Ambassador Negroponte:

Congratulations on receiving the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service from the National Committee on American Foreign Policy. It is my pleasure to join the Committee in applauding you for your long and distinguished career.

As Director of National Intelligence, Representative to the U.N., and U.S. Ambassador, your noble work has fostered peace and understanding among nations and promoted global cooperation. Though the challenges facing our country and our world have changed over time, your commitment to peace and security has never wavered. You must find great satisfaction in a job well done.

I am proud to join with the National Committee on American Foreign Policy and all those in attendance to commend your lifetime of diplomacy and public service. Please accept my best wishes for your continued success.

Sincerely,

The Honorable John Negroponte
National Committee on American Foreign Policy
320 Park Avenue
New York, New York 10022-6815
THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON  
November 14, 2006

Dear Ambassador Negroponte:

Congratulations on receiving the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service. I can think of no more deserving recipient for this high honor. Like all who have served with you, I have witnessed firsthand your unwavering commitment, integrity, and leadership.

Beginning with your service under President Eisenhower, your contributions to the State Department, the White House, and the Intelligence Community have championed U.S. interests and promoted freedom and peace throughout the world. Most recently, your appointments as the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and the first Director of National Intelligence have helped build a free and democratic nation in the Middle East and protect the liberties of the United States.

When faced with great challenges, our nation has turned to you, and you have faithfully answered the call of duty. I have every hope that this nation will continue to benefit from your contributions for many years to come. Please accept my best wishes on this well-deserved honor for your extraordinary service to our country.

Sincerely,

Condoleezza Rice

The Honorable
John D. Negroponte,
Director of National Intelligence,
The White House.
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 6, 2006

Dear Mr. Morris:

It is with deep regret that I am unable to attend the National Committee on American Foreign Policy’s (NCAFP) presentation of the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service to Ambassador John D. Negroponte.

I do, however, wish to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt congratulations, both to Ambassador Negroponte as the recipient of this prestigious award and to the NCAFP for its wisdom in bestowing it on such a distinguished patriot and public servant.

For years, I have witnessed with abiding admiration John Negroponte’s tireless service to his country -- as Ambassador to the United Nations, as the United States’ first Ambassador to a liberated Iraq, and now as our Nation’s first Director of National Intelligence. I am privileged almost every morning to join John in the Oval Office while the President is briefed on world events and the current threats facing the United States. John’s vast experience, strategic sense, sound judgment, and personal dignity combine to make him a strong leader for our Intelligence Community.

So it is fitting that Ambassador Negroponte is honored with an award named after Ambassador George Kennan. Ambassador Kennan was renowned for his foresight and penetrating analysis of the great, existential challenges that faced the United States in the 20th Century. Indeed, that rare ability to see clearly the threat over the horizon constituted a principal element of Ambassador Kennan’s legacy.
So please allow me to join the NCPP in congratulating Ambassador Negroponte and his family for this well-deserved honor.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Stephen J. Hadley
Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs

Mr. Daniel Morris
Program Director
National Committee on Foreign Affairs
320 Park Avenue 8 Floor
New York, New York 10022-6839
HENRY A. KISSINGER

December 7, 2006

Dear John:

I deeply regret that I cannot share this evening with you in person, for another commitment, made many months ago, has taken me out of town. How delighted I am, however, to be able to take even a small part in the presentation to you of the George Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service. He would have been extremely pleased that you are receiving this recognition that carries his name. You both recognized what a relentless master the art of diplomacy is, and that one’s reward is to know one is working for the values and interests of the United States.

We met in Saigon in 1965, when I came out as a consultant to Ambassador Lodge, and you were a so-called provincial reporter – an elite foreign service officer charged with analyzing the political situation. Your assessment was ominous but correct. We watched the independence day parade together from the balcony of his apartment. Later on, I invited you to join the NSC staff, where you handled the Vietnam issue during the tumultuous conclusions of the war. We worked together closely – not without occasional disagreement – which always turned into a constructive contribution.

Afterwards, you served as Ambassador to some of the most difficult, sensitive and vital areas of concern to the U.S. in Asia, Europe, Latin America and the United Nations, as well as to senior positions in the Department of State and the White House. To you fell the near impossible task of being the first U.S. Ambassador to post-Saddam Iraq. You served in each one with integrity and brilliance, successfully taking on Marxists, Sandinistas, rebellions, corruption, and insurgents of all sorts. And now you are undertaking the most important and difficult position of all, that of the first Director of National Security, charged with protecting the country from terrorism from abroad.

You have worked under and had the trust of seven US Presidents, leaving the Foreign Service for two years only, to sample the world of private enterprise, until you were called back. When you chose a career in the U.S. Foreign Service some 45 years ago, you understood and accepted its many hardships, the rigorous work, the emotional challenges of its occasional successes and inevitable set-backs.
America has benefited from your many accomplishments. I know of no one more worthy to receive this prestigious Award than you, and I congratulate you with respect and friendship.

Warm regards,

Henry A. Kissinger

The Honorable
Ambassador John D. Negroponte
c/o Dr. George D. Schwab
President
National Committee on
American Foreign Policy
320 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022
December 7, 2006

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to send greetings and warm regards to all gathered at the lovely Waldorf-Astoria in midtown Manhattan for the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service Dinner of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy.

The United States has always been at the forefront of efforts to encourage the growth and spread of democracy, liberty and peace in other countries. Our success in this quest is furthered by continuous dialogue among learned individuals known for their insight and experience in foreign policy and international relations. Determining the course of our nation’s future is subject to an ongoing assessment of world events and understanding the complexities of such decisions is clarified by those who are proficient at evaluating their impact not only today, but far into the future.

Since 1974, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy has provided a high standard of analysis and perspective regarding many areas where conflict resolution is critical. From experts in diplomacy to members of academia, the Committee represents some extremely perceptive minds and point of views that have added an important component to sensitive global debates.

No greater honor can be bestowed upon a person than the accolades of colleagues and friends for the meaningful contributions of a long and accomplished career. Tonight, on the 65th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, you recognize an extraordinary individual who, both personally and professionally, is respected and celebrated as a man of great wisdom and statesmanship. On behalf of all New Yorkers, I join in your well-deserved tribute to National Intelligence Director, former United States Ambassador to the United Nations and former Ambassador to Iraq, The Honorable John D. Negroponte. Ambassador Negroponte’s vision, understanding and courage have advanced the democratic peace process throughout the world, thereby furthering the noble purpose of our great Nation and this distinguished Committee.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and memorable evening, and much continued success in the years ahead, as you partner with the international community in promoting the freedom and prosperity of people the world over.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER  STATE CAPITOL  ALBANY 12224
http://www.state.ny.us
December 7, 2006

Dear Friends:

It is an honor to join with all those gathered to pay tribute to Ambassador John D. Negroponte as he receives the National Committee on American Foreign Policy’s 2006 George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service.

Since its establishment in 1974, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy has demonstrated a commitment to promoting human rights, supporting our allies, and advancing the interests of the United States. Throughout his career, Ambassador Negroponte has tirelessly adhered to these ideals by promoting international diplomacy as an Ambassador, and now as our nation’s Director of National Intelligence. It because of his vital work, and that of all those who keep our nation safe and secure, that New Yorkers are able to go about our daily lives, embrace our freedoms, and enjoy everything our great City has to offer. For that, we owe him immeasurable gratitude.

On behalf of the City of New York, I thank Ambassador Negroponte for his decades of service to our country. Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable evening and continued success.

Sincerely,

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor
The Honorable John D. Negroponte
Director of National Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20511

Dear Mr. Director:

On this, the occasion of your receipt of the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service, I wish to congratulate you on a career dedicated to advancing U.S. national interests both domestically and globally.

During a long career as one of our nation’s foremost Foreign Service Officers, our nation repeatedly asked you to perform difficult and oftentimes dangerous duties. Whether it has been in the Philippines, in Latin America, or in war-torn Iraq, when strong U.S. leadership has been required, our nation has regularly turned to Ambassador John Negroponte.

Your most recent assignment, as the first Director of National Intelligence, has in many ways been your most challenging. You have been tasked with organizing and leading the Intelligence Community while we are in the midst of an entirely new form of war. In an era where airliners become weapons of mass destruction and innocent civilians become the target of preference, your strong leadership has been absolutely essential. Without your committed service, many initiatives that are absolutely essential to our security would not have moved forward.

I congratulate you on receiving this distinguished award, and congratulate the National Committee on American Foreign Policy for its selection!

Sincerely,

Peter Hoekstra
Chairman
November 6, 2006

The Honorable John Negroponte
c/o National Committee on Foreign Policy
320 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear John,

I have railed for much too long and much too boringly about the need for all of us giving up something for the general good.

You are one of my real role models!

Affectionately and respectfully,

[Signature]

Peter G. Peterson

PGP/ask
Dinner Co-Chairmen

Mr. Thomas J. Moran
Chairman, President and CEO - Mutual of America

Mr. Harold McGraw III
Chairman, President and CEO - the McGraw-Hill Companies

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Mr. Maurice R. Greenberg
The Hon. Richard C. Holbrooke
The Hon. Henry A. Kissinger
Mr. Donald B. Marron
The Hon. Thomas R. Pickering

The Hon. Colin L. Powell
Mr. David Rockefeller
The Hon. George P. Shultz
The Hon. Frank G. Wisner
Mr. Mortimer B. Zuckerman

Dinner Committee

Mr. Robert L. Barbanell
John V. Connorton, Esq.
Richard R. Howe, Esq.
Ms. Madeline Konigsberg
The Hon. Bonnie McElveen-Hunter
Donald S. Rice, Esq.

Ms. Sheila Johnson Robbins
Mr. William M. Rudolf
Dr. George D. Schwab
Mr. Peter A. Vlachos
The Hon. Leon J. Weil
PROGRAM

Presentation of the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service to the Honorable John D. Negroponte for his commitment to and leadership in enhancing United States security at home and abroad

Welcome

Master of Ceremonies
Mr. Garrick Utley
President, The Levin Institute (SUNY)

Opening Remarks
Mr. William J. Flynn
Chairman, National Committee on American Foreign Policy

Dr. George D. Schwab
President, National Committee on American Foreign Policy

Mr. Harold McGraw III
Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, The McGraw-Hill Companies

Reading of the Letters from the President and the Secretary of State
Ms. Grace Kennan Warnecke
Consultant

Reading of the Letter from the Mayor of New York City
Ms. Marjorie B. Tiven
Mr. Garick Utley

Presentation of the George F. Kennan Award
The Honorable Paul A. Volcker
Honorary Chairman, National Committee on American Foreign Policy

Acceptance Remarks
Ambassador John D. Negroponte
Director of National Intelligence

Closing Remarks
Mr. Garrick Utley
Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. It’s my pleasure and joy and privilege to be with you this evening, to have been asked by the National Committee to be your master of ceremonies. My first job is to get the program started on time or, at least, failing that by a few minutes, to get it off the air on time. And perhaps a bit of media experience will come in handy here.

I think we all agree that what we’re having here tonight is more than just a gala dinner. It is a celebration and it is a confirmation. It is very much a celebration of what the National Committee does—its dedicated work for several decades in the field of international relations and particularly American foreign policy.

It’s a celebration of John Negroponte. It is also a commemoration of George Kennan whose name goes with the award that Ambassador Negroponte will receive this evening.

But it is also a confirmation of why organizations and institutions such as this exist. And I think we would all agree that in foreign policy, as in so many aspects of life, two things are prime. One is the substance of what is done and the decisions that are taken, and the other is timing. Perhaps you can control substance; you can’t always control timing.

Today as we sit here, this nation is engaged, as it has rarely been in many years, over the issues of foreign policy, specifically with the Report of the Iraq Commission, which was released yesterday.

What is really important here, I think, and what is in the air and not just in the conversation here but far beyond the walls of the Starlight Room, is that this nation is engaged in a very important foreign policy issue.

How that will be resolved, we will see. But engagement is what the National Committee on American Foreign Policy is about and engagement is what it contributes to.

Before we move ahead with the program, I want to give you one historic perspective about the issue of substance and timing and the kinds of minds that are honed over the years as they become involved in very important and delicate, sometimes even existential, decisions involving life and death and power and who holds power.

Instead of alluding to anything on today’s political or diplomatic radar screen, I’m going to go back to a June night, June 21, 1527, in a villa outside of Florence, Italy. As Walter Cronkite said many years ago on CBS Television, “You are there.”

In this villa, the home of one Niccolò Machiavelli (ah, it gets a reaction even today—isn’t that something to say), Niccolò Machiavelli lay on his deathbed, and the bishop was summoned to administer the last rites. The bishop came up to the bed and whispered in Machiavelli’s ear, Niccolò Machiavelli, wilt thou forswear the
devil. And a heavy silence hung in the room as Machiavelli considered all the political implications. He knew he was being asked to do a deal with an autocratic leader whose residence and control of the land down there knew no appeal.

Once again, the bishop said, Niccolò Machiavelli, wilt thou forswear the devil. In his last breath, Machiavelli came to the correct conclusion and said, “This is not a time to make an enemy.”

Perhaps we should just remember a bit of that kind of acuity and presence of mind as we discuss the great issues facing this nation.

A number of people, of course, play instrumental roles in the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, and we’ll be hearing from them this evening. First, I would like to introduce William Flynn. Bill Flynn has been the chairman for a number of years and has been engaged with this organization for even longer than that. Many of you know Bill, the work he’s done for the National Committee, and the work he has done to bring peace to a very troubled land in his chosen field and on his chosen conflict. It is Northern Ireland.

He was the recipient of the Committee’s Initiative for Peace Award about nine years ago in 1997. It’s my great pleasure to introduce Bill Flynn. Please step up and offer some thoughts.

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WILLIAM J. FLYNN

Ambassador John Negroponte, Chairman Paul Volcker, other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is my honor and privilege to welcome you here this evening.

Tonight the National Committee on American Foreign Policy will present the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service to a most eminent and worthy honoree. As an outstanding diplomat and now U.S. director of national intelligence, Ambassador Negroponte has compiled a record of achievement that proclaims him to be a statesman for all seasons.

As many of you here very well know, the National Committee on American Foreign Policy, under the leadership of our president, Dr. George Schwab, has been deeply involved in developing peace processes in several areas of the world, including, among others, China, Taiwan, North Korea, and the Middle East.

Widely recognized is the work the Committee has done in promoting the peace process in Northern Ireland. That effort began in the fall of 1993 when we helped to persuade our president to overrule the State Department’s rejection of a visa for Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland. That was the beginning of a very long struggle—a struggle that led to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, to the decommissioning of all weaponry by the IRA in 2005, and, just two weeks ago, to the St. Andrew’s Agreement, developed by the British and Irish prime ministers and agreed to by all of the parties in Northern Ireland. We are quite
confident that we will see by March 2007 the establishment of a democratically elected devolved government in Northern Ireland. We are very proud of the role we have played in making this happen.

Thank you for your support of the National Committee. Enjoy the evening!

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GARRICK UTLEY

Thank you very much, Bill. It was back in the 1970s that the National Committee was founded. One of the cofounders whom we all know and owe so much to is Dr. George Schwab. Earlier this evening George was telling me a bit about another cofounder. He was Professor Hans Morgenthau. That name still resonates because he was a leading political thinker, a political scientist of the mid- and latter part of the century.

I grew up in Chicago on the campus of the University of Chicago where Hans Morgenthau taught. And I remember one day when I was eight or nine or ten years old, my parents said one or two political scientists from the university were coming to dinner. One of them, I think, was Hans Morgenthau. I didn’t remember the name but recall that he had a very thick German accent, although his English was perfect. He spoke very slowly, very thoughtfully.

And being curious, I asked, “Well, what’s special about him?” My father tried to explain that although Morgenthau believed in a realistic or a real approach to foreign policy and engagement in the world, it wasn’t what some people called realpolitik.

I was too young to understand the nuances, but I learned about them a few years later. The difference was that the old realpolitik was simply about power politics, what’s perceived to be in the interest of a nation that has not incorporated a moral element into its philosophy or in its execution of foreign policy. Hans Morgenthau was a proponent of a realistic approach to resolving international problems that reflects a moral ethic.

When he came to New York, Hans Morgenthau met George Schwab. The two kindred spirits and minds and philosophies met, and the result is the National Committee. It’s in that spirit of congratulating him on the years that he has been building and leading this organization that I turn the podium over to Dr. Schwab.

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GEORGE SCHWAB

Thank you, Garrick, for your introduction. Thank you, Bill, for your remarks. Ladies and gentlemen, I join Bill Flynn in welcoming you, our distinguished guests, to the National Committee’s sixth George F. Kennan Award Dinner. Tonight, on December 7, 2006, we honor Ambassador John D. Negroponte, the director of National Intelligence and a long-time friend of the National Committee. I am pleased that a previous honoree of the Kennan Award for
Distinguished Public Service is present tonight: Mr. Paul A. Volcker.

December 7, 1941, is a date we must never forget. Sixty-five years ago the United States was brutally attacked at Pearl Harbor without warning and without a declaration of war. It taught us a lesson about how important intelligence work is for the country’s safety.

My remarks about the National Committee will be focused on one particular aspect of our work, namely, the Committee’s Track I½ and Track II endeavors. The aim of Track I½ closed-door and off-the-record meetings conducted away from the limelight with statesmen, government officials, diplomats, think tank experts, and academics is to facilitate the resolution of issues, even conflicts, that cannot be achieved through direct or government-to-government negotiations that mark Track I diplomacy. The same purpose animates Track II diplomacy—meetings with experts from think tanks and academia and former diplomats and politicians.

As many of you know, the National Committee, under the imaginative leadership of Bill Flynn, chairman emeritus of Mutual of America, has played a critical role in narrowing the gap that has divided the two communities in the North of Ireland where genuine peace is finally ready to break out.

We are still very far from peace in the tumultuous Middle East. Nevertheless, under the brilliant leadership of Ambassador Fereydoun Hoveyda, who, most unfortunately, passed away recently, we succeeded in identifying the root causes of the turmoil and have made concrete policy recommendations on what needs to be done to help bring the Arab Middle East out of its quagmire.

In the instance of North Korea, over the past four years, the National Committee has hosted a series of roundtable conferences with representatives from the United States, North and South Korea, and other interested parties. We have even been credited with facilitating the resumption of the six-party talks in 2005.

I could go on by elaborating on our Central Asia Project, with its focus on Kazakhstan, under the leadership of Dr. Michael Rywkin and National Committee Senior Vice President Donald Rice, the Project on Transatlantic Relations under Professor Bernard Brown, the Cyprus Project under Viola Herms Drath, and the new project on U.S.-UN Relations under the leadership of Dr. Benjamin Rivlin and National Committee Trustee Ambassador Donald Blinken. Instead, I will say a few words on our project on U.S.-China Relations and the Question of Taiwan under the very able leadership of Professor Donald S. Zagoria.

The leaders of the three governments have credited the National Committee with playing a seminal role in contributing to stability in the Taiwan Strait. In a letter to the National Committee a year ago, our honoree tonight, the then newly appointed director of the newly established Office of National Intelligence, Ambassador Negroponte, had the following to say:

“I just wanted to say thank you for your summary of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy’s trip to Beijing and Taipei this past January [2005]. This
is a perfect example of what ‘open source intelligence’ can provide, and I have disseminated your findings through appropriate channels.

“The Cross-Strait situation will continue to remain in the forefront of our consciousness for the foreseeable future. Your work on this subject couldn’t be more timely. . . .”

John, thank you for those words of support.

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GARRICK UTLEY

Thank you very much, Dr. Schwab, for those comments. They gave us insight into the breadth of the work that the National Committee is doing and illuminated the idea that so much work can be done behind closed doors—not just to be behind closed doors but out of the public spotlight where real progress can be made.

There are many people in this room who know John Negroponte from many aspects of life. I knew him first when I was a young reporter in Vietnam in the midsixties. He was a young diplomat. I moved to Paris and covered the Vietnam peace talks for five years. He went to Paris and covered the peace talks for five years. We also reached the same conclusion about Maxim’s restaurant, which in the spring of 1968 handed out cards to all the delegates and journalists accredited, offering 25 percent off any Maxim’s dinner for the duration of the Vietnam peace talks: Maxim’s knew a lot about food, a lot about wine, and nothing about how long diplomats could talk around a round table. John and I profited from that.

Somebody else who’s known John very closely, personally, and professionally for a good many years is Harold Terry McGraw.

Terry McGraw is the chairman, the president, and the CEO and just about everything else of the McGraw-Hill Companies. He’s really built what was a well-established company into a global presence in 40 or 42 countries employing 20,000 employees; dealing in all kinds of education, communication, and media; and opening new fields.

He is also the chairman of the Business Round Table and very much interested in this process of globalization, this new world we are all living in. And over the years, with all the other people he’s been dealing with in the private sector, as well as in the public sector, there’s been an ongoing relationship with John Negroponte. And it’s with that in mind that we’ve asked Terry to come up and say a few words about his colleague and his friend. Terry McGraw.

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HAROLD McGRAW

Good evening. Garrick, between you and Paul, we’re going to have fun.

Good evening, everybody. It’s great to be with you. Garrick, I’ve had the privilege
so many times of being with you in various venues like this where I always learn so much. And so now I’ll turn it around on you. You know that Garrick is finishing his first year, or second at the Levin Institute for International Relations and Commerce of the State University of New York on 55th and Park.

It’s delightful to be with you tonight. I’m honored to be the cochair along with Tom Moran and also to be up here with Bill Flynn and George Schwab and, of course, the fabulous Paul Volcker, who will speak later, and all of you. And I thank you all for taking time to be here. Everybody’s busy, everybody’s got a lot going on, and in this holiday season we thank you very much for being here and for supporting the National Committee on American Foreign Policy.

We also thank you for being here as the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service is given to a very special person, Ambassador John Negroponte.

John is a great American. I consider myself very lucky because I can also say that John is a very good friend with whom I’ve had the privilege of working for several years at the McGraw-Hill Companies where John served as our head of global markets.

Since John has devoted practically his entire career to public service, advancing U.S. foreign policy interests and now strengthening our intelligence capabilities, we at the McGraw-Hill Companies feel pretty fortunate to have had John on our leadership team.

And, of course, we also had the wonderful pleasure of getting to know Diana, who is a very, very special lady, an admired and respected scholar, and a humanitarian. They’re just a wonderful couple, and they’ve got a terrific family.

I got to know John when he was in Mexico, and he was very helpful to us in terms of some of the commercial interests that we had there. When I started chatting with John about how he had gotten started, he told me how excited he was about the class he was in and all the luminaries that he was with at Yale. Then he went into the Foreign Service and was up for his first assignment.

He didn’t know how that process was going to work until he was summoned and told that his first assignment was to the Consulate Office in Vietnam in 1964. That’s quite a start to a career. As Garrick talked about, when the war was coming to a close, he was working in Paris on the Paris peace talks with Dr. Henry Kissinger, with whom he would work many times in his career.

I think that one of the things that’s very exciting about the Vietnam that John helped to bring about is that it now has a population of 82 million; its GDP has been growing more than 7.5 percent over the last 10 years on an annualized basis, and, of course, it will be going into the World Trade Organization in January.

Congress should pass permanent normal trading relations with Vietnam this week.

After all of his service involving eight foreign service posts in Asia, Europe, and Latin America, including service as the American ambassador to Honduras, Mexico, and the Philippines; numerous posts at the State Department; and several
I’d like to say that John had a lot of reasons for wanting to join us, including interest in a lot of the markets that we’re in. He had five wonderful kids and a lovely wife who was going to school to get her Ph.D. We can pay a little bit more than the U.S. government.

That lasted four wonderful years. Then, darn that Colin Powell. I had been at an Aspen Institute event with Colin Powell. He sat next to me and praised John Negroponte for a whole day. He told me all the things that John had done, and I started to get a clue.

When George W. Bush was elected president and Colin Powell took over State, the telephone rang. It was time for John to go back to work, first, at the United Nations. He was very nice to invite me to a few meals, and as he was getting settled, off he went to Iraq.

When it became clear that he would be coming back, John and I started to have conversations about the possibility of his leading our whole operations in Europe or other things that might be of interest to him.

I thought those conversations were going quite well. I was in my office, the television was on, and I looked over and saw President Bush walking onto a stage. Right behind him was John. John was now the director of national intelligence, and I don’t think he’s coming back to us.

As we know, in his present role, he’s leading the effort to reconfigure our intelligence community in the post-9/11 era, a community that was created in the early days of the cold war. It now faces a dramatically new global dynamic, one that will continue to change.

Chief among the objectives of our national intelligence strategy is to build an integrated intelligence capability to address threats to the homeland consistent with U.S. laws and the protections of privacy and civil liberties.

As John himself recently described it, it’s a historic effort to adapt and develop our intelligence capabilities to address not only the threats we face but also to conform with the values that we cherish.

His characterization of this mission is reminiscent of the words of another great American, George F. Kennan, who, looking at the challenges of his day, proclaimed that the security of our nation was dependent on the American people pulling themselves together and accepting the responsibilities of moral and political leadership that history plainly intended them to bear.

John, at the time of unprecedented threats to our way of life and additional challenges in the Middle East and throughout the world, you have accepted the responsibilities of both moral and political leadership. Your significant contributions as a diplomat and an internationalist have helped us as a nation to maintain our historic role as a guiding light, illuminating and protecting the values
of freedom, justice, and pluralism. We know that you will continue to help us protect and uphold those values as you serve as director of national intelligence.

All Americans are grateful to you, John. Congratulations to you as well as to Diana and those wonderful children, Marianna, Alexandra, John, George, and Sophia, on receiving the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service. John, you are a very special American gift, a gift that just keeps on giving. Thanks, John.

GARRICK UTLEY

Thank you very much, Terry. We’re going to go ahead with our main course. When dessert and coffee appear, we’ll be back with the balance of the program honoring John Negroponte.

GARRICK UTLEY

Having spent many years in the media world and perhaps being a perpetrator of this world to a certain extent, I think it’s worth noting that with the rise of television news channels came the idea that no opinion can be left unchallenged by some counteropinion voiced in the most flamboyant and bombastic ways and the perceived need to do away with conversation and real debate in favor of what some people call noise. It reached a great pitch after I had worked for a few years at CNN. The cable news channels were moving quickly in the same direction.

One day a producer at CNN walked into my office here in New York in total frustration and said, “That’s it.” And I said, “What happened?” Well, she was a producer of one of the talk shows, and, as is the formula, there was a topic X to be debated, and she had gone through the Rolodex and had found and cast one person to come in and take a position on topic X.

She now had to look for somebody to take the opposing position and to articulate that position at a very high decibel, in-your-face manner. She called up somebody on the Rolodex, and, yes, he’d been on many of these talk shows; he knew how they operated; and she asked him, “What is your position; what do you think of this issue we are discussing?” And he said, and this is a quote, “How do I know what I think until I hear myself saying it?”

And she said, “That’s what’s happened to too much discourse in media America today” but, fortunately, not in this room this evening.

We want to hear a little bit more in terms of communication and messages this evening. We have some important messages we want to share with you.

And to read the first round from Washington is Grace Kennan Warnecke, the daughter of George F. Kennan. In her own right she is a very distinguished person
in the international field. I had the privilege of sitting next to her this evening. She talked about her school days in Moscow during World War II, with powdered eggs and powdered milk being flown in for her father and family. You can imagine what that was like.

For the past 20 years, she's been working in Russia, Ukraine, and Eastern Europe on a number of projects, including economic development. So this is more than a daughter of a very famous American political thinker and diplomat, a woman in her own right. Grace, please come up and read the messages that you have.

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GRACE KENNAN WARNECKE

Thank you very much, Garrick. Also, my brother Christopher is here, and on behalf of both of us, we’re very pleased that Ambassador John Negroponte is receiving this award in our father's name.

The first message that I'll read to you is from the White House and the second from the Secretary of State.

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GARRICK UTLEY AND MARJORIE B. TIVEN

Thank you very much, Grace, for passing on those two important messages. One more—John, from City Hall.

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GARRICK UTLEY

Now to the main event—I’d like to ask Paul Volcker to come to the podium along with Bill Flynn and George Schwab. Paul is known to all of us. He is truly a man who needs no introduction. I am happy to say that in our years of association, I have never had a disagreement with him on any substantive issue. He and I see eye to eye on every issue.

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PAUL A. VOLCKER

Chairman Flynn, President Schwab, fellow members of the National Committee, guests and foreign policy mavens, and I assume that encompasses all of us.

In fact, I suspect there are as many opinions on foreign policy as there are people here. But tonight we have the special pleasure of honoring a man who not only thinks about policy, but has spent more than 40 years implementing it.

The length and depth of his experience is comparable to that of George Kennan, in whose name we meet and dine tonight. But there is a clear contrast as well.
George Kennan’s *modus operandi* was acting behind the scenes, even using a pseudonym in setting out his most insightful and influential essay.

John Negroponte has been—and remains—a man of action. In the diplomatic world, he’s become the “go to guy” when things get tough.

What could have been a more appropriate introduction to that kind of life than his first years of service in Vietnam and an apprenticeship with Henry Kissinger. That’s, I’m told, where he first got his reputation for speaking his mind to authority!

Perhaps that also accounted for a certain lacunae in his professional career. But it’s clear that while spending time in a consulate in the Greek hinterland he found time for romance. By that bit of serendipity he now is celebrating 30 years of marriage to Diana.

Then, a few years later, but already senior in rank, he was sent to Honduras as ambassador. At the time, Honduras was the opposite of a Caribbean diplomatic backwater; John was, in fact, in charge of a vastly swollen American embassy that provided the main channel for American efforts to deal with a Sandinista Nicaragua, along with more than side glances to an unsettled San Salvador and Guatemala.

I don’t know whether subsequent tours of duty in the State Department and with the National Security Council provided enough stimulus for a man “of action,” but I do know Mexico soon followed, with its chronic civil conflict and uneasy American relationship. But it was economics that took center stage. The controversial negotiation of NAFTA took place on his watch.

Then off to the Philippines with its own internal frictions and its history of sensitivities to American bases and influence.

What more contentious an assignment than to the United Nations just after September 11 and right through to the invasion of Iraq.

That is when I briefly saw him in action. When the secretary general asked me to head a Committee of Inquiry into the United Nations Oil-for-Food Programme, I turned to John for help in assuring the support of the Security Council. It was my introduction into the political and administrative labyrinth of the United Nations. But John got the resolution in short order—it may be that was the only thing about Iraq that ever commanded expeditious Security Council unanimity.

From more than one standpoint, John’s appointment as ambassador to Iraq was a mixed blessing. Some coherence was restored to the American effort, and with UN help there was an election with unexpectedly large participation. But even John Negroponte could not produce a lasting calm. The UN certainly lost out. Kofi Annan, in the face of all the friction with the United States, commented, “John is an outstanding professional, a great diplomat, and a wonderful ambassador.”

Then, more recently, at what used to be considered a normal retirement age, Ambassador Negroponte was asked to become our first director of national intelligence. What a huge responsibility—corralling competing and demoralized
intelligence agencies into a cohesive and reliable source of information the country needs.

That’s been a familiar—and unresolved—challenge full of professional, political, and bureaucratic obstacles. It presents no less a challenge than reform of the UN itself.

One thing I know for sure, for all the sensitivity and confidentiality of national intelligence, these days there is no place for the director to hide—no escaping strong-willed agency heads, congressional inquiry, investigating journalists, unhappy staff, and inevitably second guessing by self-appointed foreign policy think tanks. Most of all is the need for coherent analysis of the most complex and threatening circumstances ever faced by this country.

For all those reasons, Mr. director, we in the National Committee on American Foreign Policy are delighted that you have agreed to be with us this evening and to accept the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service.

Paul Volcker reads the inscription on the award and presents it to John Negroponte: “The National Committee on American Foreign Policy presents the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service to the Honorable John D. Negroponte for his commitment to and leadership in enhancing United States security at home and abroad, New York City, December 7, 2006.” Congratulations.

AMBASSADOR JOHN D. NEGROPONTE

Thank you for that kind introduction, Paul.

Ladies and gentlemen, colleagues and friends: It’s a great honor to be with you this evening to receive the George F. Kennan Award for Distinguished Public Service.

I’m proud to join illustrious public servants like Cy Vance, Paul Volcker, Dick Holbrooke, and Hank Greenberg in accepting this award. At the outset of my career in the Foreign Service in 1960, I would never have dared to associate my name with George F. Kennan. Frankly, it’s a challenge for me to express how grateful I am that the National Committee on American Foreign Policy has chosen to do so.

The National Committee has played a vital role in our public life for the past three decades.

Your mission—to provide nonpartisan, thoughtful reflection on America’s responsibilities in the world—is as essential today as on the day the National Committee was founded in 1974. Under the astute leadership of Bill Flynn and George Schwab, the Committee champions the kind of clear-eyed analysis we need to keep America and her friends safe and to defend the values we cherish most.

George Kennan, of course, was a National Committee on American Foreign Policy
all by himself. He was the quintessential all-source analyst, a man of prodigious
learning, bottomless curiosity, and absolute intellectual integrity. If I may, I’d like to
talk a bit about Kennan and his times before turning to our own times, and that facet
of governmental activity for which I am now responsible—national intelligence.

As Henry Kissinger once observed, Kennan came “as close to authoring the
diplomatic doctrine of his era as any diplomat in our history.” The strategy of
“containment,” described first in his 1946 Long Telegram and later in his famous
X Article in *Foreign Affairs*, established the fundamental policy we followed
throughout the cold war until the Soviet Union succumbed to its own internal
contradictions—just as Kennan predicted 45 years earlier.

How, we might well ask ourselves, did he foresee that outcome? In the aftermath of
the Second World War, there certainly was little reason to believe things would
turn out so well. We had fought two world wars in 30 years. We had witnessed
unimaginable genocide at the hands of a fanatical ideology emerging in a country
that had been, we believed, one of the most civilized and cultured states on earth.
And no sooner had we defeated one adversary than we found ourselves confronted
by another global threat in the form of Stalinist Russia. As the wartime alliance
between the Soviets and the West transitioned to a fragile peace, the choices facing
policymakers in Washington appeared to be grim: appeasement or war.

One aspect of Kennan’s genius was to propose a middle path that eschewed
either/or thinking, sometimes referred to as the fallacy of the single alternative.
His containment strategy held that the United States could stop the global spread
of communism by applying “counterforce”—diplomatic, economic, and political
strength that could foil Soviet designs by means short of war.

To do so, Washington needed to support its allies in vital areas of the world, like
Europe and Asia, while strengthening its own society to provide a hopeful
alternative to Soviet oppression.

As Kennan wrote in 1947:

“Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can
be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly
shifting geographical and political points. (T)he main element of any United States policy
toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant
containment of Russian expansive tendencies.”

Another dimension of Kennan’s genius was to recognize something that today we all
acknowledge as a fundamental truth: a good foreign policy is an outgrowth of good
domestic policy, each lending the other strength. As he wrote in the Long Telegram:

“Every courageous and incisive measure to solve internal problems of our own society, to
improve self-confidence, discipline, morale, and community spirit of our own people, is a
diplomatic victory over Moscow worth a thousand diplomatic notes and joint communiqués.”

Of course, over Kennan’s 101 years, he saw his strategy go through many
iterations—not all of which met with his liking. At times he felt that the
containment doctrine had become overly militarized. American intervention in Vietnam was a case in point. But until the end, he remained a leading figure in American foreign affairs, influencing policy debates for decades.

Along the way, he mastered 7 languages, wrote 17 books, and won 2 Pulitzer Prizes. It is not an exaggeration to say that he shaped generations of American diplomats and continues to do so through his intellectual legacy.

In particular, I’d highlight the lasting significance of three of Kennan’s most admirable traits:

- first, as I noted earlier, his ability to synthesize information from many sources to produce a complete picture of the international scene;
- second, his willingness to take intellectual risks and challenge conventional wisdom; and
- third, his recognition of the limits of human understanding.

These traits, I would submit to you, are as relevant to America’s intelligence enterprise as they are to its diplomacy.

Because of his great learning, Kennan understood that economic, political, and security factors were not the exclusive determinants of Soviet behavior. Deep-seated, often opaque, cultural and historical factors played an important role in Soviet policy as well. This provides, in part, an answer to the question I asked a few moments ago. How could Kennan have predicted the Soviet future? No doubt it helped that he had spent a lot of time studying the Russian past.

The intelligence challenges we face today require similarly capacious thinking. In this epoch of sophisticated denial and deception, we in the intelligence community have good reason to utilize technological means like overhead imagery and signals intelligence for much of our collection work. But it is worth remembering that Kennan came to his wisest conclusions by studying the life of Moscow’s streets, talking with Russians in their own language, and studying Russian history, philosophy, and literature. To appreciate the deep roots of Russian behavior, he read not only contemporary economic and political articles on the Soviet state but also Anton Chekhov and Leo Tolstoy.

The lesson here is Kennan’s ability to synthesize all these sources to create a holistic picture of the Soviet Union. By scrutinizing the state from a variety of angles, he gained profound insight into its inner workings and intentions. Much as surveyors assess geography from many different vantage points, we in the intelligence community must strive to view the world from similarly diverse perspectives, for the lay of the land (both literally and metaphorically) can appear vastly different under varied lights.

This is why field reporting based on a broad frame of reference remains the critical backbone of intelligence analysis. Classic but not exclusive examples of this kind of thinking are State Department cables like Kennan’s Long Telegram, which are drawn from open source material, cultural research, and on-the-ground study by experts in
country who know and interact with the society and—crucially—speak the language.

In addition to his sweeping intellect, Kennan possessed that second distinctive trait I have cited: intellectual daring. To put it bluntly, Kennan was going out on a limb when he wrote the Long Telegram in February 1946. At the time, the Treasury Department, which hoped for amiable postwar collaboration with Moscow, had grown perplexed by Moscow's reluctance to join the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and so the State Department asked the embassy in Moscow for an explanation. Why were the Soviets behaving this way? In response, Treasury and State got more than they asked for. Much more. Kennan's brilliant 8,000-word reply crystallized hitherto unspoken misgivings about continuing what had been the cordial American posture toward the Soviet Union during the war and advanced a new strategic doctrine in its stead. We all can be thankful for Kennan's determination to describe the facts as he saw them.

And that's exactly what we ask from our intelligence analysts today. We live in complex times, with intricate and overlapping challenges. To understand this era fully—whether the subject is violent extremism, political instability, or the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—we must be willing to scrutinize basic assumptions and question preconceptions. This is why we are fostering alternative analysis, highlighting dissents, and methodically reviewing our most important analytic processes and products. We also are doing more than ever before to tap the expertise of outside intellectuals, who can challenge the established orthodoxy and provide us with stronger intelligence as a result.

Finally, let me turn to Kennan's recognition of the limits of our understanding: As he told a Naval War College class in 1949: “It is simply not given to human beings to know the totality of truth.”

In my current line of work, I find that both our customers and we in the intelligence community sometimes need reminding of this fact. Intelligence is no panacea. It is as much an art as a science. Yes, we can provide warning of threats and well-reasoned, well-documented scenarios of possible future developments for our policymakers, but intelligence is only one factor in the national security equation. By itself, intelligence cannot prevent fresh challenges from emerging around the globe. Yet this shouldn’t daunt us any more than it daunted Kennan. We must still strive, as Kennan always did, to try to grasp the truth, even if we cannot always appreciate its entirety.

Kennan’s talent for fusing all-source information, his intellectual risk tasking, and his ability to reach for the “totality of truth” in spite of our inherent limits have been inspirations for me as a diplomat and now as head of our intelligence community. We have fully entered a new era.

The cold war conflict is gone and with it the bipolar dynamics of the struggle for peace, freedom, and prosperity. We live in a period of greater flux, marked by a plethora of dangerously empowered state and non state actors, and confronted by the established fact that we can, if we are not united in our vigilance, be struck at home as well as overseas. Nonetheless, our times are just as susceptible to
Kennan’s wisdom and genius as his own. As he famously wrote in the X article:

“To avoid destruction, the United States need only measure up to its own best traditions and prove itself worthy of preservation as a great nation. Surely, there was never a fairer test of national quality than this.”

That observation, it seems to me, remains valid. To succeed in the face of the challenges of our day, we need only call upon the strength that carried our country through earlier eras—strengths of character and of mind—embodied, fittingly enough, by George Kennan. It is in appreciation of Kennan’s influence and in recognition of his enduring example that I proudly accept the award that carries his name.

Thank you very much.

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GARRICK UTLEY

John, congratulations, and thank you, in more ways than one. Thank you for agreeing to accept this award. Thank you and Diana for making the trip here. Thank you, most of all, for not just sharing your valuable time but for the personal investment you made in preparing your comments for this evening.

This was truly an exceptional moment for all of us. If I may use journalistic shorthand and observe that journalists like to interpret what public figures say, I’ll declare that what is at the heart of national intelligence has to be intelligence. We saw that displayed tonight in full measure. Thank you.

Thanks to the National Committee, thanks to Bill and George, and, above all, thank you for your participation and support. Good night.
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