



Remarks by
BG Edwin J. Arnold, Jr.
Mississippi Valley Division Commander
Change of Command Ceremony, St. Paul District
27 July 2001

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen and honored guests. A special welcome to Colonel Ken Kasprisin and his wife, Michelle, and Colonel Bob Ball and his wife, Sally, and their families.

Today is a very special day for the St. Paul District, and I am honored to participate in this ceremony. We're here to bid farewell to one commander and his family, as we welcome a new commander and his family.

A change of command ceremony is an important Army tradition, which has been taking place in the Corps of Engineers for more than 226 years. It's an old tradition, slightly modified over the years, but the purposes are still the same.

This is a day filled with great emotion for both commanders:

- **Pride in a job well done.**
- **Anticipation of deeds yet undone.**

For the workforce and outgoing commander, mutual respect for a seasoned, known commander.

For the New Commander:

- **Respect for employees, he must earn theirs.**
- **Anxiety about how he will lead and command.**

A command is the pinnacle of a career, that to which we all aspire.

Army is about leadership, leadership is about command.

There is continuity, as one commander replaces another. But there is also change, as we say goodbye to one leader and welcome a new one with a different approach to the same goals.

As we have done so many times before in the Corps, today we celebrate the successes of the past and look forward to the challenges of the future.

As you are all aware, this is a very active period of change in the Corps, as we continue our efforts to find better ways to serve our customers. Innovation and flexibility are the hallmarks of our organization, and our people are our greatest resource. The St. Paul District has been recognized as an environmental problem solver and a cooperative partner in complex projects.

Let me start by saying “thanks” to Colonel Ken Kasprisin. I have been able to serve as his division commander for almost a year now, and I know that his time here has certainly been busy. He convinced his employees that the only constant in today's world was change and then:

- He directed the District through a dynamic period of transition. His tenure saw the initiation of major flood protection projects, and emergency operations associated with flooding.**
- He established a Leadership Development Program to build the future by ensuring that competent leaders would be available to seamlessly continue the District's tradition of quality service to the region.**

- **During his tour, major reconnaissance studies for basin-wide watershed studies were initiated, heralding a dramatic shift from the traditional Corps focus on individual projects to a basin-wide approach.**
- **And construction was initiated on significant flood reduction projects within the region -- some of which were tested this past spring.**
- **The District's commitment to the environment was enhanced by implementation of a number of ecosystem restoration projects, as well as the reauthorization of the Environmental Management Program.**
- **During the Spring 2001 floods, he led the District in successful, effective emergency responses to communities in three of its four major river basins.**

I might also add that during his tour in St. Paul, Colonel Kasprisin's outstanding leadership skills:

√ Enhanced customer relations through personal involvement;

√ Fostered productive working relationships with other federal, state and local government agencies;

√ Skillfully developed partnerships for the benefit of communities;

√ Managed challenging projects with creativity, skill and professionalism; and

√ **Instilled in District leaders the maxim of taking care of their people while instilling in his workforce the importance of mission execution and customer care.**

In short, as any commander should do . . . he leaves the district better than when he arrived. I thank you for your outstanding leadership and dedication.

Although you will be missed, Ken, your legacy of accomplishments will remain in the district. Again, thanks for a job well done, and the best of luck in your retirement.

As for your new commander, Colonel Bob Ball -- I want to extend mine and Margaret's personal welcome to you and Sally.

Colonel Ball certainly holds the credentials to assume this command:

A graduate of the U. S. Military Academy, he holds masters degrees in engineering from the University of Virginia and in strategic studies from the Air University.

His military education includes the Engineer Officer Basic and Advanced courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, the U.S. Air Force War College, and Airborne School.

His most recent assignment was Deputy Chief of Staff, Engineer for U.S. Army South in Fort Buchanan, Puerto Rico.

Bob, the St. Paul District is a proud organization. We all know that the accomplishments I spoke of earlier were not a one-man show. The staff here at St. Paul is incredibly talented. They lead the Corps in many areas – two of which are friendliness and hospitality. I know they will make you feel right at home.

- **Embarking on a great adventure.**
- **Move fast -- may be tumultuous at times, but always fast.**
- **Demands**
- **Take time -- have fun Sally.**

Again, Ken and Michelle, thanks for a job well done. Best wishes for your transition. Bob and Sally -- welcome aboard, and hang on!

Essayons!