



10 November 1990

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

As we commemorate the 215th anniversary of our Corps, we celebrate our heritage--a heritage embodied by extraordinary achievements, legendary performances, and the quiet competence of countless Marines simply doing what had to be done. It is also a time that we rededicate ourselves to the standards of excellence set by those who have gone before us, and reaffirm our sense of purpose and commitment as United States Marines.

From the first colonial volunteers recruited by Captain Samuel Nicholas to the present day, to be a United States Marine has meant to be a privileged member of a proud family--a family of warriors whose imperatives for the future remain as our legacies from the past: courage, dedication and the willingness to sacrifice.

Today, the world is once again witness to America's resolve. And, as in the past, Marines are in the apex of the storms, demonstrating their courage, their dedication, their willingness to sacrifice. Whether entrenched in the sands of Saudi Arabia, evacuating endangered Americans in Liberia, providing earthquake disaster relief in the Philippines, or participating at home and abroad in the counternarcotics war, Marines worldwide continue to certify that our Corps of today is indeed a worthy successor to our noble past and ready to meet the challenges of the future.

Whether assigned to our operational forces or supporting them, we who are privileged to wear the eagle, globe and anchor remain a visible symbol of reassurance to our Nation's allies and deterrence to her foes. But the sphere of our influence and the dimension we add to the security of the land we love so well is not measured by our numbers, but by the strength of our character...doing what must be done; doing it right and doing it smartly. And so as we begin our 216th year, we march to the standards of courage, dedication, and willingness to sacrifice that America has come to expect from her Corps.

And as we close another chapter to the illustrious history of our Corps and open the pages of a new one, let us not forget the extraordinary sacrifices made by our families--they who endure the hardships that separation and uncertainty inevitably bring. We could not do what must be done without their compassion, their understanding, their support.

And so, Marines, to you, your families, our retired community and to our civilian employees who so ably support us, Happy Birthday and Semper Fidelis!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. M. Gray".

A. M. GRAY
General, U.S. Marine Corps