

The Commandant's Message

on the occasion of

The Celebration of the One Hundred Sixty-Fifth Birthday of the Marine Corps

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The fine and inspiring letters from the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and from the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, reminds us of two things. We have in the Marine Corps great traditions. They are the traditions of duty done and missions accomplished in difficulty and in danger, on land and sea, for a hundred and sixty-five years. The soul of our corps is in those traditions,—and it has not changed through all the years since the first United States Marines were mustered. And because this is so, there is laid upon us who are now serving, the obligation to live up to those traditions, and to hand them on untar-

nished, to the Marines who will serve after we are gone. Let us so conduct ourselves that the old-timers, whom we honor on this birthday celebration, would be proud of us, as we are proud of them. The Marine Corps has never been an easy service for soft men. It may be that we in our generation face more trying times than Marines have ever faced. Fashions in warfare change like everything human changes. Nothing stands still. We grow or we decay. But the principles of warfare never change, and the old soldierly virtues are the same that they have always been.

Courage, discipline and loyalty are the characteristics of Marines, a hundred and sixty-five years ago, and today, and tomorrow. That is what *Semper Fidelis* means.