

## THE COMMANDANT'S ANNIVERSARY MESSAGE

The United States Marine Corps has had 173 years of experience in keeping itself ready. During the coming year, we will maintain that tradition.

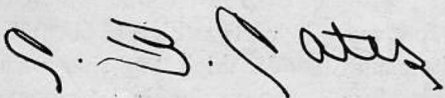
Even now we are re-examining the organization and mission of the Marine Corps in the light of current developments. The Fleet Marine Force and all supporting components are being re-organized to provide for what we know of future conditions of warfare. The changes are far-reaching and will give added flexibility, speed, and striking power to our combat units.

The Marine Corps' research program is hard at work developing and perfecting new methods and equipment for use in the pursuit of our mission in the National Military Establishment.

Today, on the occasion of the 173rd Anniversary of the Marine Corps, we commemorate the achievements of those gallant Marines who worked and fought in the service of their country. We salute them as free men with initiative, courage, and ability.

We of the regular establishment are genuinely happy to share our proud traditions of readiness and fidelity with our comrades in the Marine Corps Reserve. Those men and women who served with us in World War II contributed much to our traditions.

I take this opportunity, then, to extend my personal congratulations and greetings to all Marines on this our 173rd Anniversary. Let us renew our pledge to remain "On Guard for Peace."

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. B. Bates". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.