



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

IN REPLY REFER TO

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Members of the Marine Corps Association

Subj: Commandant's Birthday Message — 10 November 1954

November 10, 1954, marks the 179th year in which Marines have made a substantial contribution to the security of our country. Each year that great heritage of service and accomplishment grows in stature as a result of the courage, the resolution and the selfless loyalty of Marines of all ranks. As in years past this anniversary is an occasion for reaffirming our pride in the achievements of Marines in peace and war since the days of our Nation's birth.

The magnificent record which has been built over a period of almost two centuries is best measured in terms of the skill and the readiness of our Marine fighting forces, and today, more than in any era of the past, the Marine Corps must stand ready to discharge its mission as a professional fighting force prepared to meet any emergency at the moment it occurs. The grave tensions that pull at the slender threads of peace woven by the Free Nations of the world are a continuing challenge to all Marines to work side by side as a team, in a daily effort to become stronger, more effective and more fully prepared to meet our many obligations. If we are to realize our great capabilities and apply them to the fullest advantage of our Country we must face each problem with the same application and devotion to duty that has characterized the actions of our predecessors in the Corps since 1775. It is in the example set by those Marines of other generations that we find the inspiration and courage to meet our new responsibilities, — however great they may be.

I am proud of the performance of every Marine in fulfilling our obligations during the past year. Our field forces, stationed in every corner of the globe, have measured up admirably to the many pressing requirements which they have encountered. Our supporting forces have performed their exacting duties with efficiency and economy. The entire Corps, thanks to the efforts of every Marine, officer and enlisted, Regular and Reserve, is in excellent condition. It is therefore with a sense of deep gratitude in your past accomplishments, and of complete confidence in your capability to meet the challenges of the future, that I extend my personal best wishes to all Marines on this happy occasion, the 179th Birthday of our beloved Corps.

A large, stylized handwritten signature of Lemuel C. Shepherd, Jr. is written in black ink.

LEMUEL C. SHEPHERD, JR.
General, U. S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps