

*On November 10, 1955, the United States Marine Corps will have completed 180 years of service. It is a day for remembering — and a day for rededication. In the long span of years from the modest beginnings to the present, Marines have served the Nation with honor and distinction. This is our heritage — a heritage of which we are justly proud. But there is time for only a brief backward glance. The destiny of our Nation and of our Corps lies ahead.*

*A small but always ready combat force prepared for immediate service anywhere, anytime, the Marines have a distinctive role. The need for such a force is fundamental. New weapons and new concepts have not made it less urgent. If anything, the role of such a force has become more significant. The Marine Corps, prepared faithfully to do its job in large wars or small, has filled this need in the past and will do so in the future, so long as we continue to be worthy of the name Marine. This is our rededication on the birthday of our Corps. It is a task for all Marines everywhere — regular and reserve, officer and enlisted. Thus as we look back with pride let us look forward with confidence and determination.*

*Let us readdress ourselves, too, to the task of maintaining the spirit of comradeship and brotherhood in arms throughout the ranks, which is the tradition of the Corps, for it is this vital force which has made our formations peerless on the field of battle. It is in this spirit that I extend my best wishes to all Marines and their families on this 180th. birthday.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Duane C. Stephens". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping tail.