

10 November 1989

## A Message From the Commandant of the Marine Corps

This past year, Marines were asked to reflect on the examples of those warriors who preceded them. We were called to rededicate ourselves to achieving and maintaining those higher standards of excellence that our Nation expected of her Marine Corps. This challenge was met in Alaska, Panama, the Pacific basin, the Middle East, and countless other locations throughout the globe. In every case, our Corps' expeditionary capabilities were clearly demonstrated to the Nation and to the world. As always, Marines responded to the call.

As Marines, we have never, nor must we ever, permit ourselves the luxury of standing on past laurels. Our forward-thinking approach to the challenges of the future has been the key to our success as warriors. This year, each of you is asked to emphasize education and training. We have already begun with the establishment of Basic Warrior Training, the Marine Corps University, and our professional reading program, just to mention a few. The active participation of our Marines has been an important factor in the formulation and institutionalization of these initiatives.

Additionally, our Commander-in-Chief has called on us to join him in the war on drugs. As the Nation's premier force in readiness, all Marines are expected to lean forward in support of this vital national campaign. Internally, our starting point will be to ensure a 100 percent drug free Marine Corps. We will tolerate nothing less.

The initiatives we have outlined are designed to reinforce, not replace, our ongoing emphasis on our Corps' traditional values. Allow me to reiterate the heart of last year's message: we are warriors, first and foremost. Our end goal in everything we do is to guarantee that we maintain the highest level of military professionalism. This must remain our top priority.

As Marines gather together throughout the world to celebrate the 214th anniversary of the founding of our Corps, I want to thank all of you, to include our families, the Sailors who serve with us, and the civilians who support us, for your dedication and your loyalty. We owe a special debt of gratitude to our retired community whose continuing support for our Corps gives special meaning to the words "Once a Marine, Always a Marine." Finally, we must never forget those Marines who paid the ultimate price during the last year in order to preserve the peace and freedom which we enjoy today. With the legacy of their courage in mind, I call on you to rededicate yourselves to the principles which they held sacred. Happy Birthday and Semper Fidelis.



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