

was shot through the elbow and his gun jammed. He cleared the jam with one hand while Lieutenant Talbot maneuvered to gain time, and then returned to the fight. The observer fought on until shot twice in the stomach and once in the hip. When he collapsed, Lieutenant Talbot attacked the nearest enemy scout with his front guns and shot him down. With his observer unconscious and his motor failing he dived to escape the balance of the enemy and crossed the German trenches at an alti-

tude of fifty feet, landing at the nearest hospital, and left his observer and returned alone to his aerodrome."

The USS *Ralph Talbot* is one of the newer type vessels built to bring the Navy up to Treaty strength. She is 341 feet, 4 inches long; 35 feet, 6 inches beam; 10 feet, 8 inches draft, and has a standard displacement of 1,500 tons. She carries a complement of 8 officers and a crew of 150 men. Her engines develop 50,000 h. p., and she can move at a speed in excess of 40 knots per hour.

FINAL REPORT OF MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT*

1. In view of my impending retirement for age, as of 1 December, 1936, I feel it appropriate to submit a report of the principal events of my administration as Major General Commandant. The period covered is from 1 March, 1934, to date. The report contains certain recommendations considered to be of value to the service, and certain other observations which, being on the eve of retirement, I feel that I may offer with propriety.

SELECTIVE SYSTEM OF PROMOTION FOR OFFICERS

2. Promotion of Marine officers, prior to the Act of 29 May, 1934, was by seniority, except in the advancement of colonels to the rank of general officers. Normal attrition, upon which the rate of promotion was entirely dependent, amounted to only about 2½ per cent a year. There was a law providing for the involuntary retirement at the age of 56 years of colonels whose names were not on an eligible list either for promotion to brigadier general of the line or for appointment as head of a staff department, but this was to an extent nullified by the practice of placing colonels on an eligible list when they reached that age. At one time, half the colonels of the Marine Corps were on the list, and few were retired for age in grade. Accordingly, this did not appreciably accelerate promotion.

3. In consequence of the seniority system the majority of Marine officers had become, or were becoming beyond the age for useful employment in the grades they occupied. Vacancies in the upper grades did not occur with sufficient frequency to provide a flow of promotion, and the condition was accentuated by the fact that, in the readjustments following the World War, many officers were retained who were already over-age for their grades. There were captains 50 to 60 years old, and lieutenants proportionately over age. Many officers suffered from physical ailments grave enough to reduce their mental alertness and physical stamina, while not sufficient to retire them. This situation, particularly in the junior grades, is dangerous. A captain should be not older than 36 years and possess endurance equal to that of his strongest men. He must lead the day's march, and while at the end of it his men may rest, he must stay on his feet to care for them and see to the security of the camp. The actual rate of progression, prior to the Act of 29 May, 1934, was so retarded that many excellent and able young officers would

have been retired for age while still serving in the grades of captain and major. This condition of stagnation was particularly discouraging to the junior officers and their morale was impaired by it. Furthermore, it was a condition which grew steadily worse.

4. Aside from the considerations of stagnation of promotion and over-age in grade another serious defect of the seniority system was that an able, zealous, active and efficient officer could not be promoted over the head of another who lacked such qualifications. Mediocre officers were promoted as rapidly as the most efficient and there was no incentive to excel. There was, among the majority of officers, a general recognition of the gravity of the situation and an increasing conviction that, in the interests of efficiency, there should be, within reasonable standards, reward for merit and elimination of unfitness.

5. The Navy, when confronted with a similar situation in 1916 found remedy in the adoption of the selective system of promotion. Basing on the Navy's successful experience, the Marine Corps recommended legislation along the same lines which was enacted into law on 29 May, 1934. Unfortunately, a clause had to be included in that bill which prevented the elimination of officers not selected for promotion in the grades of major and lieutenant colonel. This retarded promotion until on 1 May, 1936, the clause was repealed. The Marine Corps personnel law is now in all essential respects similar to that of the line of the Navy. After a little more than two years of operation, the selective system has already increased the efficiency of the Corps. The age-in-grade condition, although not entirely corrected, is improved and Marine officers generally exhibit a keener interest in their profession and display eagerness to fit themselves for further advancement.

SELECTION OF MAJOR GENERALS

6. Under the present law, major generals are selected from brigadier generals of the line by a board composed of nine (9) rear admirals of the Navy.

7. It is obvious that selection of major generals for the Marine Corps should be made by a board composed of Marine officers. Unfortunately, there are not a sufficient number of major generals to compose a selection board. Consequently, it was necessary to turn to a Navy board. The law does not permit a mixed selection board of Navy and Marine officers. While the two Navy selection boards composed of rear admirals that have selected Marine officers for promotion to major generals have performed their duties

*With minor changes from original text.

in a most conscientious, thorough, efficient and satisfactory manner, it is felt that their contacts with and knowledge of the officers eligible for selection are decidedly limited.

8. In view of the above, it is earnestly recommended that a bill be drafted and presented to the 75th Congress to remedy this situation. In my opinion, the selection board for the selection of major generals from brigadier generals of the line should be composed of as many major generals of the Marine Corps, exclusive of the Major General Commandant, as may be available, and of a sufficient number of rear admirals of the Navy to bring the membership of the board to nine. The Major General Commandant is excluded for the reason that his actual rank may be that of colonel or brigadier general.

INVOLUNTARY RETIREMENT OF GENERAL OFFICERS

9. While the selective system in the Marine Corps, now similar to that of the line of the Navy, has been applied with excellent results through the two years since its adoption, I feel that one factor has been overlooked. In the Navy, there are enough annual retirements among flag officers to insure a flow of promotion from the higher grades to flag rank. The number of Marine general officers, however, is very small and retirement from that rank relatively slow. At the present time a number of years may pass without a vacancy.

10. To remedy this condition and to create a steady flow of promotion to the grade of general officer as well as in the lower grades, it is recommended that legislation be obtained to insure an average of two vacancies in that grade each year.

RANK OF THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT

11. The Commandant of the Marine Corps is commissioned as the "Major General Commandant" and is appointed for four years. He may be a colonel or above in rank. As Commandant of the Marine Corps he is the head of that organization and its senior officer. He has executive as well as administrative duties. As a major general, the Commandant of the Corps ranks with rear admirals of the Navy and with major generals of the Army, but often he is junior by date of precedence to many such officers on duty in Washington. The Army has a Chief of Staff with the rank of general; the Navy has a Chief of Naval Operations with the rank of admiral. Both of these officers hold this rank during their tenure of office. It is felt that, for the prestige of the Marine Corps its Commandant should have rank placing him in an appropriate position relative to the senior officers of the other branches of the service.

12. For example, if a brigadier general were appointed Major General Commandant of the Corps, he would be junior to all rear admirals of the Navy and all major generals of the Army with prior dates of rank. However, by Title 34, Section 629, U. S. Code, he is the senior officer of the Marine Corps and consequently would outrank all the major generals of the Corps. Some of these major generals unquestionably would be senior to some of the rear admirals of the Navy. Let us now suppose that

the Secretary of the Navy assigned to board or other duty two rear admirals, two major generals of the Marine Corps, and the Major General Commandant. The Major General Commandant would be, by law, senior to the two major generals but, having just been appointed Major General Commandant from the rank of brigadier general, would be junior to the rear admirals. On the other hand, the major generals might well be senior to the rear admirals. Thus, an anomaly.

13. In the British service the officer occupying the corresponding position to the Major General Commandant has the rank of lieutenant general. It is my firm opinion, from my experience as Commandant of the Marine Corps, that the officer so serving should have the rank of lieutenant general. I strongly recommend that action with this end in view be taken within the immediate future.

SELECTION OF THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT

14. I have served in the Marine Corps longer than any officer now on its active list, and my assignments have covered every phase of Marine Corps duties. I feel qualified, therefore, to register my opinion as to the future selection of Commandants.

First—I believe that no officer should serve as Commandant for more than one detail of four years;

Second—In the selection of officers to the office of Major General Commandant, I feel that the gravest consideration should be exercised. The detail should not be made on the basis of prior service, however distinguished that service might be, but on the sole ground of present and potential efficiency.

15. By law, the Major General Commandant may be chosen from the list of active officers above the grade of lieutenant colonel. A similar law defines those naval officers eligible for appointment as Chief of Naval Operations. In practice, the officer named to the latter office usually stands well down on the list of flag officers.

In other words, it is my considered judgment that seniority should not be the controlling factor in the selection of the Commandant of Marines. Whether the officer selected be the senior major general of the Corps or a brigadier general, efficiency should be the governing factor in his appointment.

HEADS OF STAFF DEPARTMENTS

16. In order that there may be wider opportunity for officers to become heads of staff departments, it is my opinion that the heads of such departments should not be re-detailed. According to law they revert to their former rank upon expiration of detail. However, I recommend that legislation be enacted to permit such officers, at any time after reverting in rank, to retire with the rank of the grade held as head of the staff department in which they served.

THE FLEET MARINE FORCE

17. The general naval policy of the United States assigns to the Marine Corps the important mission of providing forces to assist the United States Fleet. In order to carry out this mission the Fleet Marine Force was established as a unit of the United States Fleet in the latter part of the administration of my predecessor, Major General Ben H. Fuller.



18. During the past three years the Fleet Marine Force has participated in Fleet Problems and Exercises. This training has accomplished much toward the development of that detailed coordination so essential to successful amphibious operations. The inclusion of the Fleet Marine Force as a task group of the United States Fleet has greatly increased the radius of action of our naval forces.

19. The complicated problems of amphibious operations have engaged the attention of the Marine Corps throughout its existence, and every Commandant before me has held adequate preparation for such employment to be his first concern. The increasing complexity of modern war has enlarged the scope of all tactical and strategic conceptions and increased their difficulties. It is felt, however, that our present educational and training system, our procurement program, and our organization are now properly coordinated in their several functions, and are correctly directed towards the desired end.

RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FIFTH AND SIXTH MARINES

20. On 14 August, 1934, the Major General Commandant issued an order re-establishing the Fifth and Sixth Marines as active regiments for service in the Fleet Marine Force. These famous regiments constituted the Fourth Brigade of Marines in France. After the World War, the Fifth Marines served in the Nicaraguan campaign, and the Sixth Marines was a unit of the expeditionary force in China. Upon their return to the United States they were disbanded. Much senti-

mental value attached to the re-establishment of these historic units, and favorable notice was accorded by the press throughout the United States.

PROCUREMENT OF MATERIEL FOR FLEET MARINE FORCE

21. The United States naval policy approved by the Department on 10 May, 1933, provided that the Marine Corps be maintained at a strength sufficient to furnish, in emergency, a force of Marines for employment as an integral unit of the Fleet. As previously stated, the Fleet Marine Force was organized and placed on a permanent basis to fulfill this requirement. Since it is found impracticable to maintain the Fleet Marine Force at war strength in normal times, the organization, training and equipment of the Force are planned and executed with the view of rapid expansion from a peace to a war organization in the event of a national emergency. The nuclei of its component parts are held in being, always with a view to this expansion.

22. Realizing that, in emergency, insufficient time is available for the procurement of weapons and equipment to arm the added increments, a study was made of the materiel necessary to modernize the Fleet Marine Force and to make it possible for this Force to embark on its mission without delay, and in a satisfactory state of readiness to carry out its task as a unit of the Fleet. As a result of this study, Headquarters Marine Corps has drawn up a procurement program for the Fleet Marine Force, covering a procurement period of five years, and satisfactory progress on its accomplishment is being made.

INCREASE IN OFFICER AND ENLISTED STRENGTH

23. During the fiscal year 1936 funds were appropriated by Congress to increase the officer strength of the Corps from 1,023 to 1,074, the increase providing additional officers for aviation duty and for new units of the Fleet Marine Force.

For the fiscal year 1937 an appropriation was granted increasing the enlisted strength from 16,000 to 17,000 men. The thousand men so obtained are needed to furnish Marine detachments to new ships, and to the Fleet Marine Force. No increase in officer personnel was granted, but provision was made for the retention of 114 additional numbers in the grades of first lieutenant and captain, under the provisions of the Navy Personnel Act of 22 July, 1935.

LANDING OPERATIONS MANUAL AND MANUAL OF SMALL WARS OPERATIONS

24. The Marine Corps Schools at Quantico, Va., have for some years studied, in addition to their routine work, the requirements involved in overseas landing operations. Since definite results were

ADDRESS REPLY TO
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
AND REFER TO INITIALS
AND No.

NAVY DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON

10 November 1936.

From: Secretary of the Navy
To: The Major General Commandant,
United States Marine Corps.
Subject: One Hundred Sixty-First Anniversary
of United States Marine Corps.

1. It affords me great pleasure on the One Hundred Sixty-First Anniversary of the Marine Corps to extend, through you, to the entire Corps my sincere congratulations on the years of useful achievement already completed and my every good wish for continued success in the public service.

Robert A. Johnson

not forthcoming, all routine functions of the Schools were suspended for a period of six months and the energies of the entire establishment directed upon amphibious problems and small wars. The data thus collected was then examined, revised and edited by a board of experienced officers convened at Marine Corps Headquarters. The work of the board was completed in 1935 with the issue of the new "Tentative Landing Operations Manual," now published and distributed to the naval service and to certain interested branches of the Army by the Chief of Naval Operations. In the light of further study and recommendations by competent officers, a revised edition of the Manual will shortly be issued. There has also been published by the Marine Corps Schools a "Tentative Manual for Defense of Advanced Bases."

25. Since the year 1800, the Marine Corps has made one hundred and eighty armed landings in thirty-seven different countries. Prolonged and varied duties on foreign stations have accumulated within the Corps a very wide and practical experience in the principles of small wars. The Marine Corps Schools have systematized and made available this information; and in 1935, by direction of the Major General Commandant, they prepared and issued a complete treatise on the subject, called "The Manual of Small Wars." The three works form an invaluable source of professional instruction.

MESS BRANCH

26. No military detail is more important to morale and efficiency than mess duty; but prior to 1935 little or no incentive existed for the enlisted Marine to devote himself continuously to the difficult and exacting duties of cooking, baking, and mess management. Once a mess steward, by demonstrating his ability to manage a mess, attained the rank of sergeant, he could expect neither promotion nor return to line duty, since few organization commanders would exchange a capable mess steward for a line sergeant. In order to provide an incentive for Marines to apply themselves when detailed on mess duties, the Major General Commandant recommended to the Secretary of the Navy that a mess branch be established in the Marine Corps, and that a suitable number of non-commissioned officers, in all pay grades, be authorized for mess duty. The recommendation was approved by the Secretary of the Navy, appropriations have been made available for the new mess branch pay grades, and unmistakable improvement has been noted in the messes throughout the Marine Corps.

DRUMMERS AND TRUMPETERS

27. During the last two years important changes have been made in the training of drummers and trumpeters, and in the system of their promotion. A complete "Manual of the Drum and Trumpet" was prepared and published. It is used as a text at the Field Music School and has been given appropriate distribution throughout the Marine Corps. It has proven a useful publication for which there has heretofore been no substitute.

Over a period of years prior to 1935, re-enlistments of drummers and trumpeters in the Corps averaged only about 3%. This unsatisfactory condition existed because drummers and trumpeters had no avenue of promotion unless placed on some duty other than that of field music. As a corrective measure, the ranks of sergeant and corporal, drummer and trumpeter, were

established in 1935, opening promotion to the best qualified field musicians and providing opportunity of promotion for the others. As a result of these measures, the re-enlistment of field musics immediately increased to 75%, with a natural attendant improvement in morale and efficiency.

BUILDING PROGRAM AT QUANTICO, VIRGINIA

28. Officers' quarters at Marine Barracks, Quantico, Va., are inadequate to accommodate all officers serving on that post, and in consequence many are obliged to seek living quarters elsewhere. The resulting condition is in all respects unsatisfactory. It has been remedied in part by appropriations granted for the building of 14 six-family apartment houses, which are now under construction. The new apartments will accommodate 84 officers and their families. There will still be some officers residing away from their posts of duty, with consequent loss of efficiency; and further construction of officers' quarters is indicated.

29. Quarters for certain non-commissioned officers of the upper pay grades are now provided at Quantico, but they are wooden buildings, erected during the World War. They are unsanitary, a fire menace, and excessively expensive to maintain. They would be a disgrace to any American town. The Quantico development plan calls for apartment houses to replace them.

The Congress is fully aware of the above situation and has authorized replacement by modern apartments, but no funds for construction have been made available. It is strongly recommended that an appropriation be obtained for this essential work.

The Quantico development program further calls for a dispensary with 65 to 100 beds. In my opinion, this is one of the essential units, and it should be constructed within the immediate future.

BUILDING PROGRAM AT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

30. One brigade of the Fleet Marine Force and the Force Headquarters are stationed at San Diego, Calif. The barracks at present available for troops at San Diego are inadequate for their proper housing; and it is deemed imperative that additional barracks be constructed at an early date. It is urgently recommended that steps be taken to obtain the authorization and appropriation from the 75th Congress for eight (8) barrack buildings at San Diego.

RESTORATION OF COMMANDANT'S HOUSE

31. The quarters occupied by the Major General Commandant at the Marine Barracks, Washington, D. C., are historic. They were constructed for the Commandant of the Corps in 1803 and, having stood through many stirring and important episodes, may be considered in some sense a national monument. Continuously occupied for more than one hundred and thirty years, they have been subjected to extensive alteration, and the successive additions and modifications effected by different occupants have been carried through without regard for the original colonial atmosphere and architecture.

At the time of my appointment as Major General Commandant, substantial repairs to the quarters were necessary. Before directing the extent and manner of repair, I caused careful study to be made of the contemporary American architecture; and the quarters were

then remodeled with a view to restoring, so far as possible, the original character and charm of the building. A similar procedure is recommended in the event of future repairs.

PLATOON LEADERS' CLASS

32. In time of war, the necessary expansion of the Marine Corps for its war missions will result in the immediate promotion of all regular first and second lieutenants to the rank, at least, of captain, leaving the Marine Corps entirely without first and second lieutenants. By way of preparing to meet such a contingency the Congress, upon the recommendation of the Major General Commandant, appropriated funds in the early part of 1935 for the training of 250 college students as prospective second lieutenants.

The training program contemplated the appointment of outstanding sophomores and juniors from selected universities where R.O.T.C. units did not exist. The young men were to receive six weeks of summer training for two consecutive years in the so-called Platoon Leaders' Classes conducted at San Diego, Calif., and at Quantico, Va. Upon graduation from college, those students successfully completing the two years' course are to be commissioned second lieutenants in the Marine Corps Volunteer Reserve.

33. The requirements of the Marine Corps demand approximately 800 reserve lieutenants ready at all times for assignment as platoon leaders. The nature of a lieutenant's duties limit the period through which such an officer can be held in that grade. It is therefore considered necessary that about 200 Marine Corps Reserve officers, produced as set forth above, be graduated annually.

The foregoing plan for the training of platoon leaders was put into operation in 1935. Two hundred and thirty-five young men received basic military training under its provisions. Ninety-eight members of the class of 1935 have now completed the prescribed course of instruction and, on graduation from their several colleges this summer, received reserve commissions. It is felt that the classes as conducted at Quantico and San Diego have been conspicuously successful, and Congress has appropriated funds sufficient to train 450 students in 1936-37.

REORGANIZATION OF THE MARINE CORPS RESERVE

34. At the end of the first quarter of the fiscal year 1935, the Marine Corps Reserve establishment was subjected to careful scrutiny, since it was desired to improve its efficiency and to heighten its attractions by paying a larger percentage of officers and men for drills attended than had hitherto been the case. It was concluded, from full consideration of all the circumstances, that the Fleet Marine Corps Reserve, with its elaborate brigade and regimental headquarters organizations, was economically beyond the means of the Marine Corps. The large number of officers and men so enrolled were proportionately too costly for the funds available. As a result of this conclusion, brigade and regimental headquarters were disbanded. By May 1935, a reorganization of the Reserve establishment on a battalion basis was effected. A material saving in operating costs and drill pay was immediately apparent. A larger per-

centage of officers and men attending drills now receive pay for active duties performed, and there is an appreciable increase in interest and efficiency. The reorganization is already leading to a more desirable condition.

RESERVE CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

35. Until 1935, the Marine Corps Reserve units received by issue a minimum allowance of summer uniforms, unsuitable for wear in cold weather. Army and Navy Reserve units were issued warm clothing, but the funds at the disposal of the Marine Corps were insufficient for such needs. Further, the Marine Corps Reserve possesses no armories, but were obliged to perform their exercises on open lots or, in a few cities, to accept the loan of National Guard or Naval Reserve armories. This situation, coupled with the inadequacy of the clothing allowance, had the effect of suspending Marine Corps Reserve drills through the winter months in most sections of the country, so that the annual commitment of 48 weekly drills could nowhere be realized.

Representations of the foregoing conditions were presented to Congress, and provision was made in the Naval Appropriation Bill for clothing of quality and quantity adequate to place the Marine Corps Reserve on equal basis in that respect with the National Guard and Naval Reserve.

DRILLS AND DRILL PAY FOR MARINE CORPS RESERVE

36. In 1934, when I was appointed Commandant of the Marine Corps, no pay at all was allotted for drills by the reserves during their armory training period. Both Reserve officers and men performed their evolutions on a non-pay basis, while National Guard and Naval Reserve units received compensation for 48 weekly drills in the year. This situation was brought to the attention of Congress, and on 1 July, 1934, drill pay was authorized for approximately 60% of Marine reserves actually attending drills. In 1935 funds were made available for 85% of those attending drills. My administration has seen the Marine reserves placed on a substantially equal pay basis with the National Guard and the Naval Reserve.

INCREASE OF ONE RESERVE OFFICER OF FIELD RANK ON ACTIVE DUTY

37. At present the Marine Corps is allowed to carry one (1) Reserve officer of field rank on active duty. In my opinion, this number should be increased to two (2), one for the Eastern section and one for the Western section of the United States.

HEADQUARTERS FORCE

38. The clerical force at this Headquarters includes 92 enlisted men and 146 civilians. The Quartermaster employs 26 enlisted men and 4 civilians in the Marine Corps Garage, Radio Shop, and Carpenter Shop. In other words, the number of Marines stationed at this Headquarters represents almost the strength of a company. It is my opinion that the Headquarters force, exclusive of Garage and Carpenter Shop, should be at least 95% civilian. Immediate steps should be taken to increase the estimates for the 1938 budget in order to provide for successive annual increments to the civilian

personnel of Headquarters Marine Corps, thus permitting return of enlisted personnel to general service.

NAVY TRANSPORTS

39. As a unit of the Fleet the Fleet Marine Force requires transports with special characteristics appropriate to the mission of the Force. An essential characteristic of such transport is speed sufficient to keep pace with the Fleet. There are now two Navy transports in commission, the *Henderson* and the *Chaumont*. The *Henderson* was designed and built to accommodate a Marine brigade, but has been altered for the Navy Transport Service. She is now obsolete as to speed and construction, but is usefully employed between the West Coast and the Asiatic Station. The *Chaumont*, an Army transport transferred to the Navy, is inferior to the *Henderson*. I recommend that to meet the needs of the Fleet Marine Force, two transports be built. They should have sufficient speed to maintain position with the combat force of the Fleet and should carry specially designed boats and equipment for landing operations.

MARINES ON DESTROYERS

40. At present there are a few detachments of Marines on destroyers in the Special Service Squadron. This has been the case for one or two years. It is my understanding that they were originally placed on the destroyers in order to have a small landing force available on these fast-moving vessels for possible contingencies in the Caribbean area. In practice, such details immediately become part of the deck force of the destroyer and lose many of their qualities as Marines. It is believed that Marines should be put on destroyers only in case of great emergency, and be retained on board no longer than the duration of the emergency.

DIVERSION OF ENLISTED PERSONNEL

41. It must be constantly kept in mind that the principal mission of the Marine Corps is to maintain the Fleet Marine Force in readiness to move with the Fleet in a state of war efficiency. The strength of the Marine Corps has been reduced in recent years while its responsibilities and commitments have relatively increased. It is difficult with the present strength to meet the assigned missions. Therefore it is particularly important that no men be diverted from their regular duties, and the Major General Commandant through the

last three years has spared no endeavor to reduce and to prevent such diversions.

The World War Marine Corps was five times its present strength and men were available in that period for special duties in navy yards and shore stations. Marines were detailed as chauffeurs to yard commandants, as firemen, telephone operators, and as orderlies to subordinate officers. With the reduction of the Corps to present establishment, no relative release from special details took place. For instance, at the Bremerton Navy Yard there are now from 11 to 15 Marines on duty in the fire department, under the orders of a civilian chief fireman. Separated from their commanding officer, they do not receive the requisite instruction in their professional duties. In consequence, the effectiveness of the Marine guard is lowered. The principle should be recognized that Marines are placed in navy

IN REPLYING ADDRESS
THE MAJOR GENERAL COMMANDANT
AND REFER TO NO.
1850-10



AG-200-peb

HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS

WASHINGTON

10 November 1936.

From: The Major General Commandant.
To: The Officers and Men of the Marine Corps.

Subject: Anniversary Message.

1. During one hundred and sixty-one years our Corps has shown itself faithful to its traditions in sustaining an enviable record in the defense of the nation. On many fields, in many parts of the world, in Tripoli, China, Nicaragua, France, and elsewhere, it has performed distinguished and devoted service to the country.

2. In all the years the bond of mutual confidence between the rank and file has grown stronger and stronger, tending to develop our ideal "esprit de Corps".

3. On this anniversary, and upon the occasion of my retirement 1 December, 1936 from active duty after more than forty-eight years of service, I wish to express my appreciation of your devotion to duty and extend to you my best wishes, knowing that in the future you will add brilliant pages to the illustrious history of the naval service.

yards and shore stations for military duties and professional improvement, and in my opinion all firemen should be civilians on permanent status.

ENLISTED STRENGTH

42. The expansion of the Navy to treaty requirements has increased the activities of the Marine Corps. In addition, the Corps has realized the importance of the newly established Fleet Marine Force and has endeavored to raise its strength to the point necessary for operations with the Fleet. This force, being a unit of the Fleet, should be prepared to sail with it. Accordingly it should be maintained at all times at the same proportion of its war strength as other units of the Fleet.

After careful consideration, it appears that a Marine Corps strength of one-fifth that of the Navy will permit the Corps to carry out its missions as now laid down. It is therefore recommended that it be naval policy to advance the strength of the Marine Corps with the strength of the Navy; and to maintain it at one-fifth the naval strength. In this connection, it is well to bring out the point that when Congress authorized the strength of the Marine Corps as 27,400, or one-fifth of the then authorized Navy strength of 137,000, it is logical to infer that it had in view the fixing of the Corps strength in that permanent proportion.

OFFICER STRENGTH

43. To maintain the Marine Corps in its traditional high standard of efficiency, it is essential that the active officer personnel be increased to 6% of the authorized enlisted strength. The duties of a Marine officer require special training in the principles and practice of both land and sea warfare. Such training is a matter of years. Expansion of the Corps in time of war will be inevitable and immediate. Not only must trained officers be available for the instruction of new units raised to meet the emergency, but many experienced officers will be employed in the drafting of plans, in

staff work, and in schools. The recommended proportion of 6% is the least that will be adequate.

GENERAL BOARD

44. According to the provisions of the Navy Regulations, the Secretary of the Navy may appoint a general officer of the Marine Corps to serve as a member of the General Board. It is felt that the Marine Corps should be represented on the General Board, the more so since it often deals with problems materially affecting the Corps.

EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

45. Efforts have been made to make the Marine Corps educational system progressive and sufficient to meet the special requirements of the Marine officer. To this end the curriculum and methods of instruction in the Marine Corps Schools have been improved and expanded, particularly in the field of landing operations, until it is believed that the Schools now fulfill all requirements, with the exception that practical demonstrations are now prevented by the lack of a combat area.

Such an area can be obtained at Quantico by the acquisition of adjacent land west of the present reservation. It is recommended that steps be taken to acquire this land.

CONCLUSION

46. In conclusion, I desire to point out that the past three years have been exceedingly strenuous and trying upon all officers on duty at this Headquarters. The various changes occurring in the commissioned personnel, and the building up of the Fleet Marine Force have required the untiring attention of officers on duty here. The many problems so successfully solved bear eloquent testimony to the extremely high grade of officer personnel I have been fortunate enough to have had with me. I cannot speak too highly of their loyalty, wisdom and efficiency.

JOHN H. RUSSELL.

PLATOON LEADERS' CLASS

DRAWINGS BY LIEUTENANT D. L. DICKSON, U.S.M.C.R.

■ The Marine Corps, prior to the Spring of 1935, was confronted with a most serious situation. Should a national emergency have been declared, the Corps would have been without second and first lieutenants. These grades in the regular service would have been vacated due to the necessary expansion of the Marine Corps. Headquarters Marine Corps pondered this situation. Altogether too few officers were available.

Let us look back for a moment to the condition of the Marine Corps Reserve just before the World War. On March 31, 1917, six days before the war with Germany was declared, the Marine Corps Reserve had the pitiful strength in its entirety of three officers and thirty-

three enlisted men. In Brooklyn, New York, scanners of the Reserve strength found the largest single force, one officer and seven enlisted men. A month later the Reserve had been increased to forty officers and 1,047 enlisted men. The maximum strength the Reserve attained during the World War was 276 officers and 5,968 enlisted men.

These comparatively feeble forces were mustered out of active service during 1919 to remain in the Reserve until their period of enlistment was over. With the usual lack of interest in military affairs which has followed all our wars, the great majority of the members of the Reserve failed to reenlist. The force grew smaller and smaller and on July 1, 1925, there were but 147 officers and 532 enlisted men. In July, 1935, after long battles for the improvement of the Reserve, there were listed on its rolls 736 officers and 9,669 men.