



HEADQUARTERS U. S. MARINE CORPS  
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDANT  
WASHINGTON, D. C.



COMMANDANT'S BIRTHDAY MESSAGE - 10 NOVEMBER 1961

On this day each year, we Marines give serious thought to our Corps, its history, and its traditions. We pay our respects to the intrepid fighting men recruited at Tun Tavern in 1775. We recall with pride the deeds of Marines at New Providence, at Belleau Wood, on the beaches of the Pacific, on the frozen mountains of North Korea, and at scores of other places "in the snow of far off northern lands and in sunny tropic scenes."

For nearly two centuries individual Marines and Marine units have distinguished themselves, and their accomplishments have become part of the traditions of the Corps as a whole. Of all our traditions, this spirit of the oneness of the Corps is the most outstanding. It is this spirit -- together with the devotion it inspires -- that has sustained individual Marines under stress and has led Marine units to distinguish themselves on the field of battle.

Today, as in the past, the readiness of our Corps rests in large measure upon this same splendid spirit as it animates each and every Marine, officer and enlisted, Regular and Reserve. Despite our great progress in weapons -- from muskets to missiles -- we must never forget that weapons alone do not make a formidable fighting force. Even our most modern and deadly weapon is only as effective as the Marine who mans it. Today, as we salute those who have gone before us, I ask you to join me in pledging our utmost to be worthy of the title of United States Marines.

To all Marines throughout the world, and to all Marine families, on the 186th birthday of our beloved Corps, I extend my heartiest congratulations and my very best wishes. Happy Birthday.

*David M. Shoup*  
DAVID M. SHOUP  
General, U. S. Marine Corps  
Commandant of the Marine Corps