

CMC to Troops:

**'I have never been more proud
to be your Commandant.'**

Two years ago, in our report to the Congress and the nation, your Commandant stated that he had been entrusted with a Corps built upon a strong foundation and that no Commandant had ever assumed stewardship of a Marine Corps comprised of better people or equipped with more modern arms and equipment. Today, as the entire world bears witness to the unequivocal validity of that assessment, my report to you—our total force Corps of Marines: I have never felt more privileged to share the title Marine, and I have never been more proud to be your Commandant.

To our Marines and sailors in Southwest Asia: In an extraordinarily complex theater of operations, you have not only proven America's resolve to categorically reject unprovoked aggression, but have reaffirmed that our nation's investment in her Navy-Marine Corps team stands on unbeatable grounds. Congratulations on your flawless execution of Operation Desert Shield and on the superb results you achieved during Operation Desert Storm. Indeed, you have marched to the sound of thunder with distinction, courage, dedication and willingness to sacrifice that America has come to expect from her premier force-in-readiness. History shall amply record your suc-

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cess; we salute you who made it happen.

The enormous success of our campaign in the Persian Gulf could not have been possible without all supporting structures and all who man them. To all those involved in supporting Desert Shield and Desert Storm, a special thank you and well done.

Since the beginning of the deployment of our forces to the Persian Gulf, Marines worldwide have been beckoning with unbridled enthusiasm to join the operation. We not only appreciated that enthusiasm, we shared it. However, we are by mandate a Corps with global responsibilities. As such, Marines, sailors and civilian employees continued to serve with exceptional dedication outside Southwest Asia, ensuring that we truly remain a flexible mili-

tary force that possesses a wide range of capabilities and aggregate usefulness. To each of you, know that you have done what must be done and have done it well.

As we pause to take note of our historic success during Operation Desert Storm, let us not forget those who endured the hardships of separation, uncertainties of war, and the emotional cruelties of a madman—our families. We could not have done so well on the battlefield without their support at home. We thank them for their courage and support.

Finally, let us never forget those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in the Persian Gulf. For, with their untimely deaths, we lost a part of ourselves and our Corps. Our special thoughts and prayers are with their families and loved ones. We take comfort in knowing that they have joined that long list of illustrious soldiers of the sea who have paid the ultimate sacrifice so that others could be free.

As always: Take care of yourselves, take care of each other, God bless and Semper Fidelis.

**—Gen A. M. Gray
Commandant of the Marine Corps**

