

COMMAND REPORT



Reflections on the Corps

by Gen Carl E. Mundy, Jr.

Last year Marines from across the Corps and from many occupational fields met at Quantico to study, plan, and build the force structure known as Marine Corps 2001, a structure which would carry the Corps into the next century. The participants found that our Corps has a unique structure and capabilities, indeed, exactly the capabilities needed by this Nation today as it faces an uncertain future.

We are entering an historic time. The Cold War is over and many of the old threats have dissipated or receded. American military men and women are coming home from overseas where they stood guard at Democracy's gates for nearly two generations. Extraordinary fiscal and domestic pressures are serving as catalysts for a landmark review of the roles and functions of the military. As we restructure, as we examine our role in national security, it is appropriate to tell our story externally to those who make decisions of state. They must know our capabilities if they are to decide what is best for America. It is vitally important, as well, that we tell our story internally so that all Marines, young and old, understand their legacy, their unique capabilities, and their unique contributions.

Over the past year a series of pamphlets was developed that collectively articulate the capabilities of the Corps. These publications will help you understand why America, in the future as in the past, will continue to rely on its Marines. They may be obtained from the Director of Public Affairs, Headquarters Marine Corps, or individuals may request copies from the *Gazette's* editorial offices.

In the months ahead, the *Gazette* will publish a series of short articles that are reflections on the Corps. Taken together, they capture the essence of what we are as a Corps of Marines. When we say "every Marine is a rifleman" or ponder the question of what makes a Marine, the answer is revealed in these articles not so much in descriptive terms, but in ways of thinking about our capabilities and sets of capabilities. Read these articles, discuss them, write about them, and use them as learning points in your professional military education. Above all, you must know why you are unique and understand what you bring to our Nation in this historic time.

