

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT OF THE MARINE CORPS

Neller, Robert B

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For the past 100 years, the *Marine Corps Gazette* has been our principal vehicle for professional discourse. It has served as a forum to explore and debate some of the toughest issues facing our Corps, from doctrine and organization, to operations and leadership. Looking back on a century of tremendous change in the art and science of warfare, we can clearly see the *Gazette's* influence on the trajectory of our force.

While its content has reflected changing operational concerns and attitudes, the *Gazette's* character has remained remarkably consistent. Central to its identity are its authors. While the *Gazette* often includes writing from historians, academics, and General Officers, the vast majority of its contributions come from company and field grade officers and staff non-commissioned officers—those closest to the deck plates. I am proud of this fact. From the beginning, the *Gazette* has depended on these Marines, blending the perspectives of combat leadership and strategic thinking.

Second, the *Gazette* has remained anchored in the practical matters of warfighting rather than fixated solely on the theoretical and abstract. In the 1930s, officers used the *Gazette* to explore ideas related to amphibious equipment, operations and doctrine. In the 1950s, authors examined the impact of the helicopter as a tool of sea power, and in the 1960s, raised questions about guerilla warfare and the Marine Corps' role in the Cold War. In the 1980s and 1990s, these pages saw Maneuver Warfare advocates propose new ways of thinking about modern combat. And in the 21st century, Marines have taken up their pens to tackle issues related to counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, and future conflicts over the horizon. Throughout its history, the *Gazette* has been characterized by a focus on how we fight—how we innovate, adapt, and win.

Lastly, the *Gazette* has a long history of publishing controversial, unconventional, and sometimes unpopular ideas. This function—to provide a sounding board for the intellectually curious and courageous—is perhaps the magazine's most important characteristic. Our success as warfighters depends as much on our intellectual health as our physical health, and can only be strengthened through reading, study, inquiry, and debate. By giving Marines a way to test their ideas through exposure to peer review, the *Gazette* stimulates our conversation and encourages the type of fresh thinking we depend on as a Corps.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the leadership and commitment of the Marine Corps Association and Foundation. For more than a century, it has served as the premier professional organization for Marines, and through its publications like the *Gazette* and *Leatherneck*, has given us a mechanism for exchanging ideas about the major issues affecting our Corps. Thank you. I would also like to extend a special thanks to the *Gazette's* many editors over the years. You've helped countless writers mature their promising ideas and shaped the discourse for generations of leaders.

While it is impossible to predict what the Marine Corps will look like in 100 years, I am confident the *Gazette* will remain central to our professional dialogue and continue to challenge us as leaders, thinkers, and warriors. Congratulations to the *Gazette* on a century of excellence. Semper Fidelis.

Robert B. Neller
General, U.S. Marine Corps