



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20318-9999

United States Marine Corps Birthday 10 November 2007

Every member of the Armed Forces -- active, reserve and civilian -- joins me in congratulating the men and women of the United States Marine Corps on the 232nd anniversary of the founding of your Service.

We know many of you are marking this day as you and your Leatherneck predecessors have marked it so many times before; far from home, defending America's freedom by bringing freedom and hope to others. We also know the sacrifices you are bearing in that work -- the time away, the wounds borne, the lives lost -- and, like every other American, we stand grateful.

We look with pride and admiration to the challenges you've overcome in Iraq and Afghanistan, all over the world really. But we also take your counsel, as ones so experienced in this type of warfare, that gains must be preserved carefully and vigilance never forsaken. We thank your families not only for supporting you so well, but also for bearing their own burdens when you are gone and for serving this country every bit as you do. You and they have made "Every Marine in the fight" much more than a slogan. You've made it a promise. We will never take that promise for granted.

So, wherever this birthday finds you -- in whatever "clime and place" - - I hope it finds you proud of the legacy upon which you continue to build and confident in the professionalism with which you build it. Semper Fi and Happy Birthday to you all.

M. G. MULLEN
Admiral, U.S. Navy