

10 NOVEMBER 1973

MARINE CORPS BIRTHDAY ADDRESS by  
STANSFIELD TURNER

**Navy Declassification/Release Instructions on File**

PROPOSED REMARKS FOR 10 NOV 73

Thank you Bob.

I am most honored to be here at my second Marine Corps Birthday Ball as President of the Naval War College.

Last year's Ball still looms in my memory.

I recall being very impressed as the Marines whom I knew only as academics marched in wearing full dress regalia - swords flashing - I was surprised the only thing to get cut up was the cake.

I recall that so many of the Marines I knew only as quietly stoic - never smiling, but always militarily efficient in demeanor - These men suddenly were gracious, loquacious, and outgoing for the evening. In fact, there were some who had to go out assisted by two friends.

Seriously, there is a lot of good-natured banter which goes back and forth between our two services, but it's all in fun. We are proud to carry the Marines all over the world's oceans. Without them we would have to leave our gray hotels and go charging up some foreign beach getting sand in our socks - without us they wouldn't have their free rides to foreign shores and would probably try to walk across the Pacific as they all seem to think they can tonight.

That's enough repartee. I learned the hard way last year that my remarks may be returned in kind. Bob Slay arranges this program so he gets in the last word. As I recall the evening, it took him 35 minutes of speaking until his last word was finally uttered.

The year that has passed since your 1972 birthday party has seen the end of our involvement in Vietnam and the return of our POW's. Let me be the first to say that in my opinion there was no outfit or strategy which came closer to succeeding in Vietnam than you did in I Corps. Where the Army would send in a newly arrived Lieutenant Colonel with his battalion down south, in the north you would find a

---

Marine Sargeant with his CAP team. These fourteen

---

dedicated men worked closely with the villagers, at the very level wherein the enemy derived his strength. If that war could have been won - this was the way -- at the personal face-to-face level, fighting side by side with the villagers whose only goal was to survive.

I truly admire the dedication of every member of the Corps-from General through private- from strategist and tactician through infantry commander and rifleman. There is no other organization in any man's county which can compare. Two weeks ago - during our alert - I had to take a plane out of Quonset Point. I drove over in uniform, three stars on the

---

license plate and a three star flag flying. We pulled up at the gate and were greeted by the usual khaki-clad sentry. My driver flashed his ID card and started to drive on in. That marine would have no part of it. We could not proceed until I had rolled down the window and handed him my ID card for close inspection. There could be no compromise - the rules had to

be obeyed. That young man typifies the Corps to me. He was ready to take on three stars in defense of a dead air station containing only one small transport and a helo.

In this era of the All Volunteer Force, when all the other services have closely reexamined their traditions, their procedures, their discipline, their very military bearing, it is comforting to know a service which has for years been All Volunteer, yet the chief of this service, when the Navy appeared to be relaxing its regulations the chief explicitly avowed to march off in just the opposite direction - to retain the traditional values which have made the Corps world reknown.

Whether on duty at an embassy or legation in some out of the way corner of the world - guarding the entry to a Naval base, air station or the War College - serving onboard ship or in Southeast Asia - dressed in fatigues or in dress canvas - For 198 years there has been no service with your record - there has been no organization in history which better shows to all what this nation of ours should stand for than the United States Marine Corps.

Gentlemen, Happy Birthday - my hat is off to you.