

2009 Marine Corps Birthday Message from
Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus

The few and the proud were born on November 10, 1775, when Captain Samuel Nicholas, seeking to recruit men for service onboard ships of the new Navy, established his recruiting headquarters at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia. Having raised five companies of Marines, Nicholas set sail and led his men in the first expeditionary assault of the new force, capturing Nassau, Bahamas in March of 1776.

Two hundred and thirty four years later, the times have changed, technology has changed, missions have grown, and the corps is larger, but the ethos and purpose are the same. The Marine Corps stands ready for every task, and you have consistently proven your professionalism and superior combat capability in defense of the United States. Marines just show up and win.

This legacy has earned you the titles Leatherneck and Devil Dog, earned by Marines like Presley Obannon, Dan Daly, and Evans Carlson throughout the history of our nation, in campaigns from Tripoli to Makin Island. It's a tradition of honor carried on today in Iraq and Afghanistan by thousands of Marines, and exemplified by those fallen heroes who have paid the ultimate price for our freedom, Marines like Corporal Jason Dunham.

On behalf of the American people, happy 234 years to the Marine Corps. Thank you for guarding our liberty every day. Semper Fidelis.