

1967

Challenge

John T. Hayward

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Hayward, John T. (1967) "Challenge," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 20 : No. 9 , Article 1.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol20/iss9/1>

This President's Forum is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.



CHALLENGE

The United States Marine Corps celebrated its 192nd anniversary on 10 November 1967. Because the Marine Corps is one of the naval services, the history of the Marines, I'm proud to say, is naval history. Operating on sea, in the air, and on land the Marines constitute a composite military force which is second to none in each of these elements.

Marines are as old as the sea. Themistocles, when mobilizing Athenian seapower against Persian invaders in 480 B.C. "... enlisted marines, 20 to a ship from men between 20 and 30. . . ." Rome had separate legions of *Milites de Classarii*, one legion to each fleet. Cardinal Richelieu formed a *Campagne de la Mer*, French sailors trained to fight on shore.

Modern Marines came into being in the 17th century. During the wars between England and Holland the first true corps of Marines were founded. Soldiers bred to the sea were organized into elite maritime fighting forces: the Duke of York and Albany's "maritime regiment of foot," and the Royal Netherlands *Korps Mariniers*.

The first American Marines were established in 1740 when four British colonial battalions, under the command of Alexander Spotswood of Virginia, were raised to fight the Spaniards in the War of Austrian Succession. British Marines served again in North America during the Seven Years' War.

At the dawn of the American Revolution the Continental Marines came into being, thus inaugurating 192 years of

naval history. Following the enactment of a resolution by the Continental Congress on 10 November 1775, Samuel Nicholas was commissioned a captain on 28 November 1775, and he remained the senior officer in the Continental Marines throughout the Revolution.

The exploits of the Continental Marines throughout the Revolution struck the benchmark for exploits to come. During sea fights Marines headed boarding parties and fought from the tops and rigging as sharpshooters. In February 1776, 268 Marines landed on New Providence Island in the Bahamas, a military endeavor which established the maritime landing force as the spearhead and cutting edge of seapower.

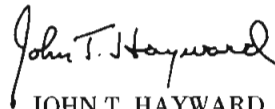
Since this limited beginning, United States Marines have been in every major war and all the minor ones. They have fought valiantly in each of these, and during periods of peace they have served their country with no less valiance. Each of us recalls with pride and gratitude the locales which Marines have enshrined with gallant action: Haiti, Nicaragua, Shanghai, Tientsin, Belleau Wood, Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Iwo Jima, Inchon and, now, Con Thien. Every one of these names and what they signify has given Americans the right to walk a little taller.

The Corps today is as strong and as faithful as it has ever been in its glorious history. For, in the words of an eminent military scholar Colonel Robert Heintz, Jr., USMC (Ret.):

Trained men who will stand and fight are never obsolete. It was not the Bowman, but the long bow, not the Cavalryman, but the horse, which vanished from the scene. Men — the man, the individual who is the Marine Corps symbol and stock in trade — constitute the one element which never changes. Whether the landing force lands by pulling boat, by motor sailer, by diesel-driven barge, or by helicopter, there must still be fighting men in between. The fearsome, untried weapons of today and tomorrow cannot change the fact that only attack — not defense — wins wars. . . . Far from being obsolete in an era of atomic weapons, the ready expeditionary force, made up of professionals, is the cutting edge of cold war.

As long as the sea is at our gates, North America will remain the last great island. Her strategy, if she is to win and survive, must be maritime.

The spearhead of this maritime force is the Corps. It is always ready to take the point, to project the force of American seapower, as it has for the past 192 years. With strength undiminished, with glory untarnished, with loyalty unquestioned, Marines have, and will continue to meet every challenge.



JOHN T. HAYWARD
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy
President, Naval War College