



## *Past is Prologue: 21st Century Marines*

The contribution of the Marine Corps to the ascendancy of the United States as a superpower during the 20th century is a matter of record. We are the nation's premier expeditionary force. That is our history, our legacy and our future.

The roles and missions assigned to the Marine Corps of the 21st century will be

consistent with the expectations of the American people that this nation remains the world's uncontested military capabilities leader. Today's Marine understands and accepts this challenge, and today's Marine Corps is secure in knowing that it can meet the nation's expectations. Simply put, we know who we are, we know what we do, and we are absolutely dependable in executing the nation's will across an increasingly wide spectrum of potential conflict.

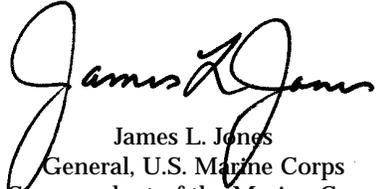
As we examine our current contribution to the nation's military capability at the dawn of the new century, we find that the Marine Corps provides 20 percent of the nation's ground maneuver battalions, 20 percent of its tactical fighter and attack aircraft, 17 percent of its attack helicopters, and about a third of the combat service support capability in the active structure. Increasingly in the future, when circumstances demand that America turn to military force, Marines will be a necessary and critical part of the equation.

To meet the challenges of the future, the Corps continues to evolve. Changes to our equipment bring an enhanced capability to project power when and where it is needed, while new tactics enable us to employ Marine forces with maximum advantage. We explore new patterns of thinking that reflect the realities of a changed world. We have redefined readiness to include non-traditional influences that affect unit

performance, such as family preparedness and base infrastructure. In all cases, we seek change for one reason: to enhance the capability and utility of our Operating Forces.

Concepts and Issues 2000 addresses our approach to this objective by explaining the breadth of the Marine Corps' modernization enterprise. It is a ready source of information concerning our operational focus and program direction, including the conceptual foundation that underpins our efforts, the past year's operations, and the specific programs that will equip our combat-ready Marine forces for the future.

Today, as always, our contribution to the nation lies in our ability to "Make Marines, Win Battles and Create Quality Citizens." This is a path that we have followed for generations. Concepts and Issues 2000 demonstrates our enduring commitment to meeting the expectations of the American public and the requirements of national defense in the new century.



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