



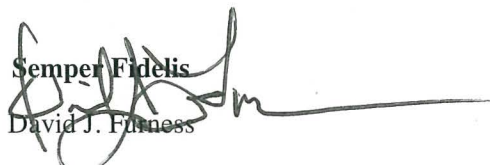
Marines and Sailors of the 2d Marine Division, it is indeed an honor and privilege to once again be a proud member of this unit—a unit that is truly "Second to None." As I assume command of the Division, I want to take a moment and share my thoughts on being a Marine, a Leader, and a member of this storied division.

General Krulak, our 31st Commandant, once stated that the Marine Corps "makes Marines and wins battles." Therefore, being a Marine is about winning -- Marines fight and win battles. That is our mission and our only reason for existing as an institution. We must never lose sight of that fact. The 2d Marine Division must be prepared to fight tonight; to close with and destroy any enemy by combined arms maneuver and close combat. To that end, the backbone—the very foundation of this division— is the Marine Rifle Squad. The focus of every commander and staff officer in this Division is to make our 243 rifle squads the most disciplined and lethal rifle squads in the world. They are the Division's Main Effort. Every action we take in peacetime or war must foster their success.

The 2d Division is a "team of teams", that fights together from the fire team through the division level. We'll train hard, frequently, and together. We should all take this occasion to rededicate ourselves to preparing our minds, bodies, and spirits for the next fight, a fight that we expect will be unlike any the Marine Corps has experienced in over five decades—division level combined arms maneuver against the armed forces of a peer nation state. This will be a nasty, bloody fight and every Marine and Sailor in the 2d Division must be ready for it.

I expect the leaders of this division to lead from the front. They must be passionate about training and taking care of their Marines, always demanding yet genuinely caring—no screaming martinets in the 2d Division. I want leaders to instill a love of discipline and attention to detail in the Marines and Sailors under their command. Disciplined units sustain fewer casualties in combat and are more lethal. I want leaders in this division, both officer and enlisted, to possess the tactical and technical expertise in the profession of arms so they can teach their Marines to fight; they will be physical fit, with the endurance to lead from the front in the most demanding circumstances; and to devote themselves every day to win the respect and affection of their Marines through their concerned, caring leadership and exceptional performance of duty. Leading Marines is a privilege and honor and one that can never be taken lightly or for granted. Most importantly, leading Marines should be fun and enjoyable. Attack every day with a happy heart and remain cheerful even during trying times; cheerful positive leadership is infectious and is a combat multiplier. Make this our standard.

Finally, we are the current bearers of the Torch of the "Follow Me" Division, a unit rich in history with a renowned heritage of success in combat. Every Marine and Sailor must never forget that their actions reflect on our Colors and every other Marine and Sailor in this unit. Second Division's reputation is important— so protect it. Every one of us has been bequeathed a legacy of combat valor and fidelity by Marines & Sailors who carried the Division's colors overseas and won hard victories at Guadalcanal, Tarawa, Saipan, Tinian, Okinawa, Grenada, Beirut, Panama, Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan. We will write our own chapter in the history of this proud division; let's make sure it's one we will be proud to tell. Again, I am honored to be your Commanding General, I look forward to working with you to make the 2d Marine Division the best trained, best led, and most lethal division in the United States Marine Corps.

Semper Fidelis

David J. Finness

Major General, United States Marine Corps