

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
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FOREWORD

Since Fleet Marine Force Manual 1, *Warfighting*, was first published in 1989, it has had a significant impact both inside and outside the Marine Corps. That manual has changed the way Marines think about warfare. It has caused energetic debate and has been translated into several foreign languages, issued by foreign militaries, and published commercially. It has strongly influenced the development of doctrine by our sister Services. Our current naval doctrine is based on the tenets of maneuver warfare as described in that publication. Current and emerging concepts such as operational maneuver from the sea derive their doctrinal foundation from the philosophy contained in *Warfighting*. Our philosophy of warfighting, as described in the manual, is in consonance with joint doctrine, contributing to our ability to operate harmoniously with the other Services.

That said, I believe *Warfighting* can and should be improved. Military doctrine cannot be allowed to stagnate, especially an adaptive doctrine like maneuver warfare. Doctrine must continue to evolve based on growing experience, advancements

in theory, and the changing face of war itself. It is in this spirit that *Warfighting* has been revised, and this publication, Marine Corps Doctrinal Publication 1, supersedes Fleet Marine Force Manual 1. I have several goals for this revision. One goal is to enhance the description of the nature of war—for example, to emphasize war's complexity and unpredictability and to widen the definition of war to account for modern conflict's expanding forms. Another goal is to clarify the descriptions of styles of warfare. A third goal is to clarify and refine important maneuver warfare concepts such as commander's intent, main effort, and critical vulnerability. It is my intent to do this while retaining the spirit, style, and essential message of the original.

Very simply, this publication describes the philosophy which distinguishes the U.S. Marine Corps. The thoughts contained here are not merely guidance for action in combat but a way of thinking. This publication provides the authoritative basis for how we fight and how we prepare to fight. This book contains no specific techniques or procedures for conduct. Rather, it provides broad guidance in the form of concepts and values. It requires judgment in application.

Warfighting is not meant as a reference manual; it is designed to be read from cover to cover. Its four chapters have a natural progression. Chapter 1 describes our understanding of the characteristics, problems, and demands of war. Chapter 2 derives a theory about war from that understanding. This theory in turn provides the foundation for how we prepare for war and how we wage war, chapters 3 and 4, respectively.

Experience has shown that the warfighting philosophy described on these pages applies far beyond the officer corps. I expect all Marines—enlisted and commissioned—to read this book, understand it, and act upon it. As General A. M. Gray stated in his foreword to the original in 1989, this publication describes a philosophy for action that, in war, in crisis, and in peace, dictates our approach to duty.

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Commandant of the Marine Corps

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Throughout this publication, masculine nouns and pronouns are used for the sake of simplicity. Except where otherwise noted, these nouns and pronouns apply to either gender.