



INTRODUCTION TO A PARADE

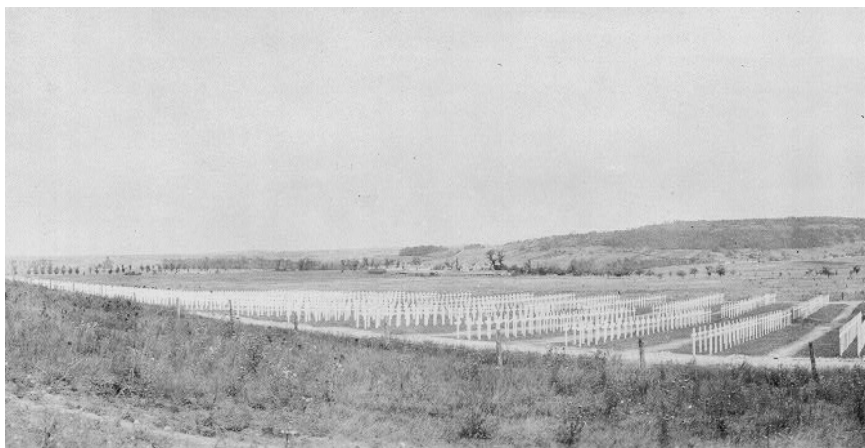
THE U.S. MARINE CORPS, BELLEAU WOOD,
AND THE RULE OF LAW

Robert D. Hogue

GOOD AFTERNOON. We have quite a crowd here today, both in size and stature. I am honored to welcome Justice Neil Gorsuch; Judge Marian Blank Horn and her husband Bob; Judge Penney Azcarate; White House Counsel, The Honorable Don McGahn; The Honorable Rachel Brand; The Honorable Mark Paoletta; The Honorable Greg Katsas; The Honorable Cal Scovel; The Honorable Joe Schmitz; The Honorable Bill Chatfield; Acting Department of the Navy General Counsel, Anne Brennan; Deputy Assistant Attorney General Larry Rothenberg; Deputy General Counsel of the Department of the Navy Gary Rensing; Assistant Deputy Commandant for Installations and Logistics Bryan Wood; Gregg Kendrick of the Marine Corps Forces Cyberspace command; Deputy Counsel for the Commandant, Mark Romano; Brigadier General Dennis Crall; Brigadier General Kevin Winters; and my fellow General Counsels from the Small Agency General Counsel mafia.

Ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the 37th Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Robert Neller, Cheryle and I want to welcome you to the Sunset Parade. It is an honor for us to host this parade and to treat you to a

Robert Hogue is Counsel for the Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps. This article is based on Mr. Hogue's remarks (slightly revised and condensed) before the June 6, 2017 Sunset Parade at the Marine Corps War Memorial, Arlington, Virginia. Copyright 2017 Robert D. Hogue.



American cemetery — Belleau Wood, France. “Where over 2000 regulars and Marines who gave their lives in the victory at Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood, sleep the last sleep.” Photograph by W.L. Mann (Aug. 25, 1919).

display of military discipline by America’s finest fighting force. Before we begin, I want to thank the Marines from the Mess, the Band, and Colonel Ty Zagurski and the Marines of 8th & I.

It is my honor to be the master of ceremonies who introduces you to our Marines. These Marines are a visible symbol of this country’s strength and success on the battlefield. They have earned the respect and gratitude of this nation and have become, like the men and women of all our Services, a source of great pride for this country. These are the young men and women who answer the nation’s call in its darkest hours, and who today are fighting a generational war against a terrorist enemy. Many thousands have answered the call; many have paid a steep price. In the current conflicts, our services have lost nearly 6,000 in combat, with another 52,000 wounded. It is because of the courage of these young men and women that we get to live in a nation governed by laws, not despots.

Our Marines and all servicemembers have shown great courage and fighting spirit in the current conflict, reflecting proudly their martial heritage. There is no better historical example than what happened this week, 99 years ago, in the first Great War, when the Marines faced the German Army for the first time at a place called Belleau Wood. The U.S. Army’s Second Division held the German advance at Château-Thierry, turning the

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Germans toward Belleau Wood and the Fourth Marine Brigade. French leaders of the allied force issued orders to dig trenches in the rear, but the commander of the Marine Brigade instead ordered the Marines to “hold where they stand.” The Marines used bayonets to dig shallow fighting positions and waited for the German advance. German infantry attacked the Marine positions through the wheat fields with fixed bayonets. The Marines waited until the Germans were within 100 yards before opening fire, and dispatched waves of German infantry, forcing the survivors to retreat into the wood.

The Germans dug in along a defensive line and prepared for the counter-attack, which came on June 5. To reach the woods, the Marines would have to advance across the same open wheat fields and meadows. German machine guns swept the fields with accurate, high-intensity fire. The Marines had to launch six counterattacks to reach the dense wood. Brutal fighting followed, small arms and hand-to-hand. Nearly 1,100 Marines were lost, including 31 of 32 officers – the worst single-day casualties in Marine Corps history to date. The next day’s fighting, in which Dan Daly earned the Medal of Honor, was nearly as bad. For the next 20 days, they fought day and night, without relief, without sleep, often without water, until they finally defeated Germany’s best divisions.

This fighting spirit would be echoed again in far-away places with names like Tarawa, Guadalcanal, Peleliu, and Okinawa. It would be seen in Korea; in Vietnam; in Baghdad and Ramadi; Fallujah and Musa Qala. It is important



U.S. Marine Corps Sunset Parade — Arlington, Virginia. Photograph by Sgt. Melissa Marnell (June 30, 2016).

to remember that these were not wars of conquest. In fact, in the last century of war, we have not sought more than a plot large enough to bury our dead. No – these are wars of ideals. We fight for freedom and to ensure that we are not subjugated by tyrants or terrorists.

The Marines do this in fulfillment of an oath they have taken to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies. That oath, at its heart, is a sacred pledge to establish the Rule of Law. That oath has been taken by many in this room, and not just the Marines. Some serve alongside our uniformed colleagues as civilian employees or contractors, sometimes at the risk of their lives. I raise this with you tonight because of the many attorneys in the room; because we, as a group, should ensure that the oath is not hollow. I ask you to remember, as you watch these young Marines tonight, that they can only create the opening for the rule of law to take hold; that sometimes the leading edge of democracy is a bayonet, held by a volunteer; that sometimes the price of freedom is blood; that we owe it to those who face our enemies to give meaning to their sacrifices. We owe it to them to stand by our oaths to uphold the Constitution.

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Today it is my distinct privilege to serve as host while our Marines honor a man who has taken the oath and who now serves a role as critical to the survival of this nation as our armed forces. He comes with a track record demonstrating a career commitment to the Constitution, and to our system of justice.

Neil M. Gorsuch graduated from Columbia University (B.A., 1988); Harvard Law School (J.D., 1991); and Oxford University (D. Phil., 2004). He clerked for two Supreme Court justices (Byron White and Anthony Kennedy). He pursued private practice at Kellogg Huber, served as principal deputy associate attorney general at the Department of Justice, and was appointed the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit in Colorado. He was nominated by President Trump to serve on our Supreme Court, confirmed by the Senate and recently sworn in.

Ladies and gentlemen, before we adjourn to the parade deck where the Marines will render their salute, please join me in welcoming Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, The Honorable Neil Gorsuch.

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