

COMMANDER'S 911 REMEMBRANCE MESSAGE

Please take a moment today to pause and remember those who died Sept 11, 2001, in the attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and United Flight 93. We must never forget the 2,996 people who lost their lives that Tuesday morning, including 2,902 Americans and the more than 200 citizens from 40 other countries.

It was an attack on the innocent of all ages, races, and ethnicities. It was an attack on America, on our way of life, on our families, and on our values. It was an attack on our core -- on who we are, what we do, what we think, and how we feel.



As Lt. Gen. John Kelly, USMC, stated so eloquently, “We didn’t start this fight. It came to us with a visceral loathing of everything we are. It will not end until our adversaries and their allies around the world — state and non-state alike — understand that we will never lose our faith or courage as a people. Our enemy is savage. He offers absolutely no quarter. He has a single focus, and that is to either kill every one of us here at home, or to enslave us with a sick form of extremism that serves no god or no purpose that any decent man or woman could ever understand. I don’t know why they hate us, and I don’t care. But we are America, and we must prevail because we remain mankind’s best hope for the future. Not them.”

As a result of the attacks, we have been at war for 11 years. We will forever be changed, as Americans and as Marines. Some of us were already Marines on 9/11; others joined directly after the attacks. Many of our Marines now were 9, 10 or 11 years old on the day of the attacks. The attacks on 9/11 are the most defining experience of this generation.



There were so many heroes who selflessly laid down their own life for another. While most people ran away from the Towers, policeman, fireman, and emergency personnel ran towards the chaos, towards the unknown and unpredictable. A businessman aboard Flight 93 shouted "Let's roll" as he

and his fellow passengers rushed the cockpit to subdue the hijackers. As a result of their actions, the plane crashed into a field at Shanksville, Penn., preventing the hijackers from attacking their prime target in Washington DC.



Please take a moment today to remember the heroes of that day; remember their families and as often as possible, thank the first responders who serve aboard each of our installations.

Our installations remain vital in preparing our Marines and Sailors to go into harm's way. We must remain most ready when the nation is least ready, and take the fight to the enemy so we can protect everything we value as Americans.

Take a moment today to pause and remember 9/11, remember the heroes of that day and those that have lost their lives in past 11 years fighting America's enemies. We can never forget how that day changed all of our lives forever. We will remember always.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vincent A. Coglianesse".

Vincent A. Coglianesse

Brigadier General, U.S. Marine Corps

Commanding General

Marine Corps Installations West – MCB Camp Pendleton