



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20380

IN REPLY REFER TO

DX:JTJ:af

17 APR 1971

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF TROY, MICHIGAN UPON
THE OPENING OF THE NEW TROY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "In the highest civilization, the book is still the highest delight. He who has once known its satisfactions is provided with a resource against calamity."

Time after time the heritage of freedom enjoyed by our Nation has been protected from calamity by the mass response of a well informed citizenry. In order for the citizens of a nation to respond effectively to a call from that Nation, the citizens must have free and ready access to the truth.

The greatest repository of information and truth available to any citizen is the Public Library. Here one may find both sides and many opinions on the same subject. Here, laid out for your guidance, is the best- and the worst-thinking of thousands of your ancestors. A library, however, as opposed to electronic methods of information transmittal, requires an active search after truth, rather than a passive absorption of a broadcast. By using this new facility frequently, you will provide yourself with a background of knowledge from which you will be able to pick, choose and weigh the information and make sound judgements.

The privilege of a new Public Library where both the pros and cons of an issue are presented, without Governmental interference, is something not enjoyed by all the peoples of the Earth. I enjoin you to take advantage of this golden opportunity so that through your knowledge this priceless heritage may be preserved for those generations as yet unborn.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "L. F. Chapman, Jr.", is positioned above the typed name.

L. F. CHAPMAN, JR.
General U. S. Marine Corps
Commandant of the Marine Corps