

Roots in Ripon

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Chuck Roots

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Warrior Culture

Over the expanse of human history, a definite group of people in each society has emerged and remained. This group is often referred to as a "warrior culture."

"A warrior is a person specializing in combat or warfare, especially within the context of a tribal or clan-based warrior culture society that recognizes a separate warrior class or caste."

There is a strange phenomenon that takes place within cultures that have a warrior culture. When that culture finds itself threatened by outside forces, they turn to the warriors, or army, to confront the foe in order to protect the general populace. Though this warrior class is expected to be prepared to take on all comers, when the battles are over and all has returned to normal, the warriors who have done all the heavy lifting are expected to disappear until needed the next time a threat is on the horizon.

Many of the greatest and most fearsome warrior cultures became more than protectors of their tribe or people group. Often these warriors took advantage of their military power and acumen, becoming predators of the very people they were expected to shield from evil forces.

The United States of America is a rare exception when it comes to establishing and maintaining a warrior culture. When it became evident that the colonists were going to end up doing battle with Great Britain and her vaunted Red Coats, the Continental Congress met in Philadelphia to establish a standing army. It was on April 19, 1775 that the "Shot heard round the world" was fired during a stand-off between the American "Minutemen" and the British Redcoats on Lexington (Massachusetts) Green. This brief skirmish quickly moved to the next town of Concord, and the American Revolutionary War was underway.

However, it was not until June 14, 1775 that *"Congress approved the raising of 10 companies of riflemen to enlist in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia until the end of the Revolutionary War."* At the time, this band of warriors was known as the Continental Army but is still regarded as the birthday of the United States Army.

Some months later, the Continental Navy was formed, giving birth on October 13 to what would later become the United States Navy. In all six frigates

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were commissioned and used for several decades, especially against the pirates from four Muslim African Mediterranean countries preying on ships, stealing cargo, and taking control of the ships for their own use. The sailors were taken prisoner and made slaves on these pirate ships.

The next military force to be birthed was the Continental Marines on November 10, 1775. In a famous watering hole known as Tun Tavern in Philadelphia, the first Marines were recruited *"to conduct ship-to-ship fighting, provide shipboard security and discipline enforcement, and assist in landing forces."* They were known primarily for their exceptional fighting ability.

The United States Coast Guard was established on August 4, 1790, known then as the Revenue Marine. Not until January 28, 1915 was this naval force named the United States Coast Guard.

With the advent of flight, early military fighting forces were part of either the Army, the Navy, or the Marine Corps. Formed initially August 1, 1907, the Army Air Corps became a significant force all in its own, eventually separating from the Army to become the United States Air Force on September 18, 1947.

What makes our military unique in the realm of warriors is that all branches of our military serve at the pleasure of the head of the civilian government – the President of the United States. The President is Constitutionally appointed to be the president of all Americans, but (s)he is the Commander in Chief of every single person serving in the uniform of our military. This was brilliantly thought out by the Founding Fathers so as to deter the threat of mutiny, junta, insurrection, or a military takeover of the civilian government from within the military. The President is the boss over every single general and admiral, period. He can promote them to positions of greater authority and responsibility, or he can fire them.

Another fact that makes our military unique is that we do not wage war or engage in military conflict with the purpose of expanding our reach and power around the world. Some territories have been gained through treaty and purchase. And even land we have won at the expense of American blood on foreign shores we eventually turn the land back over to the original owners. Or if a country which we formerly liberated and where we had military bases decides they don't want us there any more, we pull out. France is a good example. We saved their bacon in two world wars last century, yet sometime in the 1960s they wanted all of our military bases closed. Same with the Philippines in the 1990s. We even returned the blood-soaked island of Iwo Jima to the Japanese, where more than 6000 Marines were killed toward the end of World War II.

Our military is part of that historical warrior culture, but we who serve or have served, are perfectly content to live in peace. Please remember this. They are not to be feared except by those who are enemies to liberty and freedom.

These are our sons and daughters. May God bless them and the USA!

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