

A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDANT



General Louis H. Wilson
Commandant of the United States Marine Corps

For organizations—or individuals—to know where they are going, they must have goals. Otherwise, they drift and get nowhere.

These are some of my basic goals for the Marine Corps:

Combat readiness. We have seen the need for this—once more—just recently. We shall see the need again. For our units to be ready, the individual Marines in those units must be ready—physically, mentally, and professionally. This kind of personal readiness cannot be regained overnight, once a Marine has let himself go. In the past, crisis situations have found Marines yanked from comfortable spots in the rear with the gear and thrown into hastily-forming combat units. Our calling as Marines demands that we never forget that...and stay ready.

True quality. The battlefield is no place to find out that our standards should have been higher. In attacking the problem of quality, I am starting with a tough look at our recruiting effort and carrying it right on through the training pipeline and into our operating and support forces. Specific standards and quality control measures will come out of this.

Individual responsibility. I want Marines who are self-starters, with self-discipline. These are people who can face—realistically—their own shortcomings and set about to correct them—not to seek excuses for them. As a minimum standard, everyone must pull his own weight. In many cases, our standards are already high enough, but Marines are not always *really* required to meet them. Such practices, where they exist, shall cease.

I do not believe in magic, instant solutions. On the other hand, I do not believe we face any problem so severe that it will not yield to a systematic, steady attack by all Marines. This approach has worked before. It will work again.