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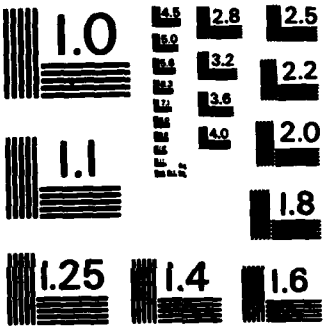

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# STUDENT ESSAY





## LEADERSHIP, FOLLOWERSHIP, AND DISSENT

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL J. W. MCCLUNG, USMC







11 APRIL 1985

US ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA

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USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

# LEADERSHIP, FOLLOWERSHIP, AND DISSENT

INDIVIDUAL ESSAY

by

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## ABSTRACT

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Leadership is the glue that holds the Corps together and is the key to the Corps' future. Leadership is an art and cannot be quantified. Leadership in the Corps has not changed, but some issues are surfacing that could have a negative affect on the quality of the Corps' future leadership. These issues are:

- o The leadership and management debate.
- o The importance of followership.
- o The tolerance and forum for dissent and speaking up within the Corps.

In order for quality leadership to continue within the Corps, leadership must be the watchword, not management; the art of followership must be practiced and taught; and the Marine Corps as an institutiton must encourage and tolerate dissent.

# LEADERSHIP, FOLLOWERSHIP, AND DISSENT

> Leadership is intangible, hard to measure and difficult to describe. Its qualities would seem to stem from many factors. But certainly they must include a measure of inherent ability to control and direct, self-confidence based on expert knowledge, initiative, loyalty, pride, and a sense of responsibility. Inherent ability obviously cannot be instilled, but that which is latent or dormant can be developed. The average good man in our service is and must be considered a potential leader,

said General C. B. Cates, when Commandant of the Marine Corps.[1]

Leadership is the glue that holds the Corps together. It was leaders with vision and courage who were responsible for the Corps' transformation from a small force assigned to serve aboard naval vessels to its status today. Sound, dynamic leadership has allowed the Corps to flourish, and it is leadership that holds the key to the Corps' future.

Leadership is an art that has defied man's every effort to quantify. The fact that every Marine, particularly a Marine officer, is trained to be a leader is a trait that I believe separates Marines from all other services. Has Marine Corps' leadership changed since 1966 when I entered the Marine Corps? The Basic School (TBS) still teaches the leadership traits and principles as the building blocks for Marine leaders; the need for a Marine leader to be a good follower is still emphasized; leadership by example remains the watchword; lieutenants are encouraged to be imaginative, innovative, and to challenge.

Based on the foregoing, the basics of leadership have not changed since 1966. Leadership today is still people oriented and complex. However, some issues have evolved that affect the execution of leadership responsibilities.

These issues if not resolved could have a negative influence on the quality of the Corps' future leadership. The issues are:

- o The leadership and management debate
- o The importance of followership
- o The tolerance and forum for dissent and speaking up within the Corps

"When we cannot measure a thing's importance, we ascribe importance to the things we can measure."[2] This quote reveals the tendency to place value on the quantifiable, and to discount the intuitive or subjective opinion. Because leadership is an art, and thus unquantifiable, the movement within all of the military services and the civilian sector has been toward management with its quantifiable characteristics. In fact, the fascination with measurement and analysis is a prevalent trend throughout US corporations and companies.[3]

The tendency within the military has been to acquiesce to civilian trends such as measurement and analysis instead of searching for methods to improve the development of a commander's judgment and experience, which is the essence of leadership. The military has been willing, and in fact eager, to adopt civilian management techniques to military use. In many cases little thought has been given to whether or not these civilian trends were actually suited for military use.

Recently "command" has been added to the leadership and management dilemma. Leadership, management, and command—must a commander take the time to try and sort the three of these into proper order and perspective each time a decision is required? Leadership should be put at the forefront of our thoughts and priorities. Command and management then become workable tools as subsets of leadership. If leadership is the essence of the Corps' existence, we need to take charge and lead!

A look at history indicates that the leadership and management issue is not new. In general, anytime the services have not been engaged in combat, the tendency has been for management oriented leaders to rise to the top. An argument could be made that even during periods of combat, many of the service leaders have been more managers than they were heroic leaders.[4]

The Marine Corps has not drifted to management as fast as the other services, but management indicators are "popping up" that show a movement towards the management philosophy. The arrival of the "ations" is one indicator that the managers have moved in. Some of the "ations" are centralization, standardization, computerization, systemization, and quantification to name but a few. The "ations" have resulted in the availability of more timely and pertinent information from which leaders can make management decisions. In this way, the "ations" have provided cost savings for institutions. But the "ations" have not always given leaders more time to lead, nor have they made leaders more effective. This is not to imply that the quality of leadership in the Corps is marginal or unsatisfactory, but is meant to inform that the addition of the "ations" has not necessarily made us "better leaders". The savings in time and improved efficiency promised by new management oriented techniques and systems should have one goal—to allow more time for leadership. However, the converse of this is often the case; less time is available for exercising leadership. In many cases, the addition of a new system has brought with it an increased manpower requirement that must be filled from the ranks. The creation of occupational specialties to manage the new system has often taken priority for personnel assignment, and, in the final analysis, has depleted the manpower of the "fighter" ranks. More and more specialist or technicians to manage the new systems has detracted from leadership.

Technicians often are more interested in the gadgetry and management off the system than in leadership of the personnel running the system.

Each new system, has come with detailed instructions and orders on all phases of the system from implementation to reporting. Each program has a cognizant staff section which views its particular program as the most important function of a unit commander. Consequently, when the Inspector General's Inspection (IG's) or the Commanding General's Inspection (CG's) rolls around, every single area must be capable of passing the inspection with equal marks. It makes no difference what the function's importance is to the command. A below average or unsatisfactory in the mail room is just as significant as a below average or unsatisfactory in the armory or maintenance area. All functions of a command are not equally important and critical to mission accomplishment. However, the standardization and centralization of functions by the highest headquarters has somehow made all areas equal. The old adage of centralized planning, decentralized control is fast becoming more fiction than fact. A commander must be allowed to set priorities in his command. To effectively lead, the commander must have the prerogative to set priorities according to the time available, personnel available, and most importantly, the mission.[5]

The management systems have reduced the commander's judgment to minor relevancy in the military decision process. The commander's judgment; that 'old gut feeling"; that feeling which comes with experience, vision, and sixth sense; that subjective opinion of an experienced professional; means little today unless it can be quantified. This shift toward management theory is eroding the military tradition which vests considerable authority, responsibility, and accountability in the commanding officer.[6] Today everything must be centralized, standardized, and systemized to be good, to be cost effective, even to be right. We may be shifting the balance between leadership and

management too much in favor of management. The Marine Corps must continue to emphasize that leadership is the name of the game and that every officer is a leader first and technician or manager second.

Beginning in the late 70's, a regular criticism of the military has been a lack of innovative or creative thinking by its leaders. On many occasions, the Marine Corps alone has been cited for its ability to foster and allow innovation and imagination to grow; however, at times the Corps has been guilty of succumbing to the urge to quantify and standardize which stifles the fertile environment for creative thinking. The need to be disciplined in thought may not be the invention or fault of the military. A recent US News and World Report article discussed the tendency of the US education system to orient on disciplined, reasoned thought, vice "how" to arrive at a conclusion using reasoning processes.[7] The education system is not used as an alibi. Just because we were taught that way, we do not need to perpetuate this system in the military. We have the tools available to create change; an effective leader can effect change.

The need for leaders to be innovative and imaginative is greatly affected by the management syndrome. Admiral Arleigh Burke in a recent Navy Times interview stated that he believed leadership today was too restrictive in writing and giving orders. Consequently, junior officers today expect to be told what to do. But the leaders of tomorrow are the ones who do not wait for someone to tell them what to do. Leaders of tomorrow will take action without fear of erring.[8] The first statement is the management syndrome at work; the second statement is leadership.

The Military Reform Debate Group has been critical of military thinking in terms of not allowing subordinates to make mistakes or the "zero defects" approach of military leaders. Some of the reforms have stressed that strict

rules and long checklists for battle will not guarantee success, but will cause failure. Their argument is that in order to guarantee success, warriors must be flexible in thought process to rapidly grasp opportunities as they are presented on the battlefield.[9]

Information from personnel in the Fleet Marine Force (FMF) and research indicate that the Marine Corps is continuing to put leadership at the front of tactical thinking by emphasizing initiative, mental agility, and the use of mission type orders. Continuing efforts are being made to shift from management oriented, rigid checklists, to actions based on the situation while applying checklists and rules as a guide, not an absolute. The Marine Corps' performance in the tactical arena has displayed strong emphasis on leadership, but not enough has been done about the bureaucracy of garrison or staff work. It is important that the Marine Corps stay away from bureaucracy and management orientation and rely on leadership; thus, allowing commanders to use initiative and common sense. The point is old and basic—how we train in peace is how we will fight in war!

Marine officers spend the majority of their careers in garrison or staff work outside the Fleet Marine Force. During this time, they are subjected to reams of standard operating procedures (SOP's), countless systemized, centralized or standardized systems, and tons of quantified data. As a result, officers will have spent most of their careers being bureaucrats, exercising management techniques. Will they be able to rapidly shift to a tactical situation and execute mission orders, demonstrate flexible thought, and outmaneuver and out-fight the enemy? Warriors may wait for detailed, "how to" orders and lose the chance for victory. The recent Gazette article "Let's Manage to Avoid Bureaucracy" should be like a stake in the heart of bureaucratic management.[10] I remember my tendency to require detailed, voluminous SOP's and orders that left as little room as possible for interpretation or

mistakes. (All of this done under the guise of being professional and attentive to detail—the mark of a professional!) This is how I was taught, but that does not make it right.

The Corps must be careful that it does not confuse being detail conscious and professional with over centralization and standardization. Leadership must remain more important than management or command and must be the focus of our attention. The reduction of all things to checklists, yes or no, right or wrong, should not necessarily be the order of the day. It must be remembered that knowing the rules for leadership is not enough, but that to be a good leader, the rules and techniques must also be practiced. A balance must be established and maintained that allows adequate room for subordinates to make mistakes, learn from these mistakes, and live to fight another day. Seniors must be prepared to underwrite the mistakes of subordinates in order to develop and foster initiative and experience.[11] Senior officers must be the proponents and advocates of leadership over management and command.

Leadership is the key to the Corps' future, and an essential ingredient of dynamic leadership is the art of followership.

> Followers are the backbone . . . of any great nation or organization, for without loyal, dedicated followers, there can be no effective leaders. And, without effective leaders, no viable organization could survive,

said General Paul X. Kelley, the Commandant of the Marine Corps.[12]

> Followers are potential leaders. Ambition to be a good leader and proven leadership ability lead the way from followership to leadership, and the most effective follower is that individual whose goal is future leadership,

is a thought from a 1975 Infantry magazine article.[13]

Most Marine officers believe that a good leader must also be a good follower. But perhaps some have forgotten why it is important to be a good follower or where and when this idea originated. The leadership and follower-

ship relationship can be traced to at least the time of Aristotle and Plato. It was the opinion of these two men that effective leadership may be primarily an achievement of the followers; able leaders may only emerge from the ranks of able followers; and, a good personal history of followership may be a significant factor in leadership.[14]

The Marine Corps' philosophy of leadership and followership is discussed and outlined in NAVMC 2767 "Users Guide to Marine Corps Leadership Training." NAVMC 2767 sets out that followership must be an integral part of our philosophy, for it is the base upon which future leaders are tempered. It further states that the most effective leader is a good follower who by his practicing of good followership in his actions sets the example for his subordinates.[15] Everyone is familiar with the leadership traits and principles which are used as the basis for most Marine Corps leadership training. However, the traits of a good follower are not formally published. The thoughts and ideas expressed below are some that have been suggested:[16]

The good follower:

- o Knows his job and how it contributes to the accomplishment of the mission of the unit.
- o Knows the characteristics of his leader.
- o Has the capacity for inspiration.
- o Exercises loyalty up as well as down.
- o Exercises initiative commensurate with his knowledge.
- o Readily accepts and is prepared to accept.
- o Accepts the decisions of his leader and wholeheartedly does his best to implement these decisions.
- o Is fully aware of the leader's capacity or limitations to provide.

Another set of suggested followership principles are:[17]

- o Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
- o Be technically and tactically proficient.
- o Comply with orders and initiate appropriate actions in the absence of orders.
- o Develop a sense of responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.
- o Make sound and timely decisions or recommendations.
- o Set the example for others.
- o Be familiar with your leader and his job, and anticipate his requirements.
- o Keep your leaders informed.
- o Understand the task and ethically establish it.
- o Be a team member—but not a yes man.

Both lists of suggested behaviors indicate that leadership and followership require many of the same traits, and that they are closely related.

The first formal teaching of the leadership and followership relationship begins at TBS; however, personnel entering TBS have been introduced to leadership and followership and have practiced the two in some degree before arriving at TBS. The assignment of officer candidates to various leadership billets, i.e., squad leader, platoon sergeant, etc., is one method that teaches leadership and followership interaction. It does not take long for an officer candidate in the billet of platoon sergeant to fathom that the performance of the platoon depends upon the attitude and effort of followers as well as on his attitude and effort. Likewise, as a member of the platoon and a follower, one quickly realizes that good followers usually perform better than poor followers when acting as billet holders. Thus, the idea that a combination of

good followership and leadership enhances the performance of a unit is demonstrated.

Followership, like leadership, is difficult and illusive to define and explain. Some important points in the discussion are:

- o A good follower accepts the decision of his leader and wholeheartedly does his best to implement the order or decision.[18]
- o In combat or a crisis situation, obedience to orders by followers is essential for quick action and is often essential to guarantee success.[19]
- o The military contract demands the total and almost unconditional subordination of the interest of the individual if the interest of the group should require it for success.[20]
- o Followership is not blind obedience to orders. Discipline is not simply unhesitating obedience to orders.[21]

Marines have traditionally been good followers. "Instant obedience to all orders" is firmly implanted in the mind of every Marine, officer and enlisted, from the very first day of Marine training. Simultaneously with the teaching of obedience to orders comes the teaching and development of common sense, sound judgment, and what constitutes a lawful order. The necessity for a follower to determine what constitutes a lawful order is an element of the leadership-followership relationship that has changed since 1966. I left TBS with the idea that instant obedience to all orders was essential for combat success and was the mark of a good Marine. I believed that by my example of carrying out all orders, I would teach and reinforce the art of followership to my subordinates. I was taught that if I disagreed with an order, I could recommend an alternative plan or approach if time permitted,

but once the commander made his decision, the order would be carried out as if it were my own.

The idea that I might be given an unlawful order or that I would be required to differentiate between a lawful and unlawful order was not part of my thought process. Today, the need for officers to evaluate orders to determine if the orders are lawful has complicated the leadership and followership equation. The need to evaluate orders can be attributed to many experiences. Some of these experiences are the result of the Vietnam War, when unlawful orders were sometimes unhesitatingly carried out, even when subordinates knew the orders to be unlawful. The emergence of the mass media coverage and publicity of cases in which unlawful orders were executed has added to the awareness. Involvement of US forces in low intensity conflicts where interaction and contact between civilians and military personnel routinely takes place has made it critical that the military leader carefully evaluate the intent of orders. Implicit in the above is the need to have knowledge of the "Law of Land Warfare"—something that received very little emphasis until after Vietnam.

Officers today are much better prepared to evaluate orders, but more importantly are more aware of the need for evaluation. However, what the options are if one does not agree with a lawful order may need more emphasis. To disagree with a lawful order and <u>properly</u> voice this disagreement is not an indication of poor followership. In fact, if a system is to flourish, everyone's opinion should be considered when time and mission permit. However, once the commander or person in charge gives the final word to execute the order, subordinates are bound to carry the lawful order out to the best of their abilities. Good followers do not ignore or half-heartedly execute lawful orders even though they may be in disagreement with the orders.

The officer education process must weave together the wisdom to determine what is a lawful order and what is an unlawful order; the common sense, moral courage, and judgment to tactfully disagree and recommend an alternative to a lawful order; and the knowledge that by virtue of the officer oath of office and professional code, one is obligated to wholeheartedly execute lawful orders.[22]

Junior officers today are often accused of being poor followers because they want to know why an order must be carried out. This rap against junior officers needs to be carefully examined. Do senior officers believe that "instant obedience to all orders" and an explanation of "why" are mutually exclusive? If "instant obedience" and "why" are not compatible, then the training and developmental teaching of each officer must be reexamined. The necessity for the evaluation and asking why is exactly what we are teaching junior officers. Good leadership has always demanded that the why be explained in as much detail as time and mission permit. An explanation of why builds knowledge in the junior officer and forms a basis of trust, so that when the mission does not permit an explanation of why, "instant obedience" comes naturally to the subordinate. Instant obedience and why are not incompatible. Young officers are being taught correctly, yet they are sometimes faulted for doing what they were taught. Senior officers must continue to encourage the philosophy of asking why and build on this workable concept to develop young officers with moral courage who know when to ask "why" and when to "obey instantly".

Any discussion of a good follower must include the subject of loyalty. Loyalty must exist up and down the chain of command; it must be extended to the immediate senior and must be given to the lowest ranking subordinate, but most importantly, it must be to the Corps. If a senior is wrong, the situa-

tion must be surfaced. The wrong cannot be allowed to continue as it can become harmful to the Corps. Loyalty is not saying what someone wants to hear or agreeing with the boss. General Shoup, former Commandant, once said, "I don't want a 'yes' man on my staff because all he can give back to me is what I believe already."[23] Leaders must teach what loyalty is and is not, and followers must understand that "blind loyalty" is not healthy and may be detrimental to the Corps' future.

Followership is taught and taught well at TBS, Command and Staff College, and the Amphibious Warfare School. NAVMC 2767 discusses the leadership and followership subject. What is missing? Perhaps it is the continuous, daily teaching of the art of followership. This daily teaching must show that good followership has always been an essential characteristic of a Marine officer and that there is a critical and delicate balance between "blind obedience" and "instant obedience"; "all orders" and "lawful orders." When was the last time "followership" was the subject of an Officer's Call?

The third area of concern in the execution of leadership responsibilities is the tolerance and forum for dissent.

> In systems, discipline is nearest perfect when it assures to the individual the greatest freedom of thought and action while at all times promoting his feeling of responsibility toward the group,

is a quote from S. L. A. Marshall's book The Officer as a Leader.[24] Marshall is confirming the premise that for discipline to be at its best, individuals in an organization must have the freedom and latitude to be able to be constructively critical. When individuals are encouraged and allowed to disagree, the individual will be more responsible toward the group.

There are several words that can be used to describe an individual's freedom of thought and action. The best word, in my opinion, is dissent. By definition dissent is a difference of opinion or an opinion contrary to the

majority. The word dissent to many will be too strong or will create a negative feeling. The negativeness associated with the word is mainly the result of its use during the anti-Vietnam War movement of the early and mid 1970's. I agree that dissent is a strong word, but I disagree that it should carry a negative connotation or that dissent is disruptive or divisive to the good order and discipline of the Corps.

In my opinion, dissent is the best word to describe a difference of opinion or opinion contrary to the majority for the reason that the term quickly grasps the attention. Dissent should be regarded as a positive action to be used to keep the Corps viable and invigorated by providing a source of constant internal evaluation. To dissent, to speak up, is an obligation of every leader, follower, and Marine officer.

> A new spirit is discernable, one that allows juniors to make suggestions and have them seriously considered by their superiors, that permits unit commanders to talk to civilian theorists and draw on their ideas, and, perhaps most important, that gives winning in combat priority over bureaucratic behavior.

This quote from the book Defense Reform Debate suggests a new or changing attitude in the military as a body; an attitude that allows and encourages subordinates to ask why, to recommend alternative ideas, or to ask to discuss orders or command decisions.[25] In other words, subordinates are being encouraged to dissent.

The Marine Corps has always fostered the advancement of junior officer opinions and ideas. For me, the learning process began at TBS. The seed was planted that if I wanted to dissent, that I could and should recommend an alternative solution via the chain of command. I learned that if my recommended resolution was not endorsed by the chain of command, my duty was to execute the original order to the best of my ability. I was taught that to continue to voice my dissent after the commander made his decision or to by-

pass the chain of command with my recommendation was not ethical or healthy for the unit or the Corps.

Today, officers at TBS are still taught and coached to bring forward their ideas and offer their opinions. They are coached on the time and place to speak. But dissent is a difficult subject to teach, and dissent like leadership and followership is an art. An art can best be perfected with time and experience. With time and experience, common sense and judgment to enable individuals to know when, where, and how to dissent will be developed. Therefore, dissent must be continually reinforced and coached after TBS.

Dissent does present dilemmas to a system that is based on the fundamental principle of obedience to all orders and unquestioning belief in the judgment and wisdom of those in authority.[26] A military officer, a professional, gives up part of his freedom and liberty to live a life based on obedience, discipline, selflessness, and honor. Yet, by his oath as an officer, he is bound to dissent and speak up when he believes something is not right.[27] There are dilemmas inherent in dissent: we want officers to challenge ideas and recommend better ways of doing things; we want junior leaders to exercise initiative and be innovative thinkers; we want junior leaders who are not afraid to take unpopular positions and who are not afraid to stand on principles. But we are sometimes intolerant of subordinates who disagree with our opinion or disagree with opinions that we support; we do not want dissent that becomes divisive or disruptive to the harmony of the Corps or dissent that goes outside of the chain of command.

Often the difference between the positive and the negative aspects of dissent will be unclear. Subordinates will not automatically know when, where, and how to dissent. If subordinates are not allowed to dissent with command opinions and decisions, they will soon cease to disagree and to provide potentially "better ways". They may remain silent or go outside the

chain of command with their dissent, both of which are wrong. Teaching and coaching of subordinates in the when, where, and how to dissent must be done continually, but most importantly, leaders must tolerate and encourage dissent.

Members of the Reform Group and others have been quick to urge dissent and extol officers to speak up with ideas and to advocate change. But the advocates of officer dissent have not been as quick to discuss the potential danger of becoming too vociferous in disagreement or the potential disaster of taking one's dissent outside the chain of command. Reformers do not point out that when an officer's dissent becomes so strong or disruptive as to jeopardize the good order and discipline of the command, that officer may be placing his career on the line.[28] An officer must realize that strong dissent may be career damaging.

For reformers to discuss and advocate dissent without understanding or addressing the chain of command is irresponsible. The message that is being sent to officers, particularly junior officers, is that an idea should be pursued in whatever manner necessary to achieve its implementation, either via the chain of command or outside the chain. The chain of command was designed for the orderly military achievement of obedience and discipline without destroying independence and impulse.[29] The chain of command was not designed to restrict initiative or to limit dissent, but was designed to provide a framework essential to withstand the pressures of combat and other national emergencies. A strong, sound chain of command is vital for combat success. The chain of command is and always has been a strength of the Corps.

The change in leadership style since 1966 has had an effect on the chain of command. Today senior commanders are far more visible and accessible than I remember commanders being in my early years in the Corps. When senior

commanders are out and about, they naturally want to talk to subordinates, particularly the troops, lieutenants, and captains. This is healthy, but it is not healthy if juniors are allowed or encouraged to use this time to voice disagreement with an order or policy of their immediate commander. The senior must not allow this to happen without correcting the behavior. This increased visibility of the commander and his accessibility to junior officers may be the reason for the real or perceived idea that more and more people go outside the chain of command for resolution of a problem. The chain of command is effective because it works both up and down. When the chain of command is violated, it can weaken the pride, prestige, enthusiasm, ability, and attitude of leaders, particularly company leaders.[30]

As a general rule, dissent is not considered being disloyal; however, the stronger the dissent and the more controversial the subject of the dissent, the more often one's loyalty is questioned. Loyalty is a complicated subject. An officer person must be loyal to his unit, to his superior, and to subordinates. But, the ultimate loyalty of an officer must be to the Corps. Loyalty requires a great deal of moral courage. Being loyal to the Corps may sometimes be considered by some as being disloyal to one's unit, superior, and/or subordinates. The dilemma betweeen dissent and loyalty is difficult to explain and teach. There is no textbook answer; there is no black or white explanation. Seniors must be honest and open in discussing dissent and loyalty and develop subordinate officers with moral courage, character, and integrity who are not afraid to dissent for the welfare of the Corps.

Anytime changes to a system are directed or discussed, there will be resistance to the change (dissent). A fact of life is that most changes are not usually viewed as positive improvements by everyone. Therefore, many times the word comes from "high" that the changes are good; that they will be implemented; and that they will work. This word from higher headquarters is

not an effort to discourage and muffle dissent, but is necessary to implement the change and to give the change a fair chance to succeed. Sometimes it is forgotten how difficult it is to change a system such as ours—one that is full of emotion, traditional values and that has been extremely successful in its performance. This is a delicate issue that requires a master's touch to insure that the changes are implemented in a positive manner, and that room for dissent is not blocked. Just by chance, a dissenting view may be the one that presents the best course for the Corps.

There is a need to dissent by all ranks. The perception that officers cannot and should not dissent is mostly a result of the Vietnam War when many thought that military officers became "yes men" and were afraid to jeopardize their careers by disagreeing with superiors.[31] Company grade officers are faulted for dissenting too much and field grade and flag officers are faulted for not dissenting enough and for not tolerating dissent from subordinates.

Dissent is a difficult subject to discuss, and it is even more difficult to teach. The reason, right time, how loud, and where to dissent will never by crystal clear and will most likely be different from one individual to the next. This is because there is an art to dissenting. Dissent cannot be quantified or confined to a checklist, and it can best be learned with experience and time. The discussion of the potential for career-ending consequences is a delicate issue that must include a discussion of ethical values, loyalty, followership, moral courage, and integrity, but the discussion must be conducted. If junior officers are not allowed to dissent and gain experience, they most likely will not dissent as field grade and flag officers when dissent may be critical to the future of the Corps.

The focus of the Marine Corps must continue to be on leadership, and the steady drift of the Corps toward management must be stopped. Leadership, like war fighting, is an art, and thus cannot be reduced to logical and quantifiable objectives and tables. Clausewitz wrote when talking about war,

> In short, absolute, so-called mathematical, factors never find a firm basis in military calculations. From the very start there is an interplay of possibilities, probabilities, good luck and bad that weaves its way through the length and breadth of the tapestry. In the whole range of human activities, war most closely resembles a game of cards.[32]

The Marine Corps cannot become mesmerized with or a prisoner of management tools that direct attention away from the art of leadership. A return to leadership in all areas of the Corps must be the order of the day. Management and command must be integrated as a subset of leadership, not as an equal. The requirement to specialize cannot be allowed to make an officer a technician instead of a leader of Marines. It is not enough for an officer to know the leadership traits and principles, but an officer must be able to effectively apply the traits and principles.

Good followership has been an important quality of Marine officers for generations. The fact that some officers have forgotten when and where followership was taught and some do not believe a good leader must be a good follower should be of concern. What followership is and is not should be discussed more after TBS, and the importance of being a good follower must be stressed. Followers must ask why, but should be prepared to carry out orders if time does not permit explanation. Leaders should not confuse the asking of why with disloyalty or poor followership by subordinates, but must remember that to tell why is and always has been a trait that will improve mission performance. Leaders should remember that the best way to demonstrate and teach followership is through personal example.

Like followership, healthy dissent is necessary for the future success of the Corps. Dissent is a leadership tool that can be used to provide constant internal evaluation. The best unit is one that tolerates dissent because this dissent contributes to an individual's strong feelings of loyalty toward the unit. When dissenting, officers must know and understand the proper method for airing their views and opinions. The importance of a strong chain of command must be emphasized. Regular coaching, combined with time and experience, are the best teaching devices for when, where, and how to dissent.

The Marine leader is different. He is different because he has been taught to be a leader, not a manager; he has been taught that a good leader must also be a good follower; he has been taught what dissent is, and that it is a positive force in the Corps. It is good to reflect back to the beginning and to remember what the bread and butter of the Corps has been. The bread and butter of the Corps has been and is leadership.

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