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08Sep17

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON CAMARADERIE

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on camaraderie. It is meant to put into perspective what it means to be part of a Marine Corps fellowship.

2. Brotherhood, sisterhood, good fellowship are all common synonyms of camaraderie. In the military sense camaraderie demands a deeper understanding of the bonds formed between warriors through common experience, sacrifice, and history. Marines are joined for eternity in sorrow and joy.

3. Today as we remember our history and honor our fallen in the celebration of our 75th Anniversary, we strengthen our bonds with the past and form new bonds among our present brothers and sisters in arms. The rededication of our Unit Colors represents our commitment to uphold the legacy of 1st Battalion, 12th Marines. The Memorial of those who comprise our Honor Roll represents our commitment to the legacy we carry forward in their memory.

4. We celebrate together in many forms; annually we celebrate the birth of our Marine Corps on November 10th, 1775. We celebrate the Patron Saint of Artillery, Saint Barbara and a noteworthy Continental Soldier, Artillery NCO, and spouse, Molly Ludwig Hays a.k.a. Molly Pitcher. We celebrate the joining of new members as we send off our alumni to new duties and retirement. We celebrate deployments. We celebrate the outstanding efforts of our Marines and Sailors in promotions and through awards. We celebrate our accomplishments in the successful completion of exercises. Ceremony lends to camaraderie as much as the actual shared experience.

5. Tonight we share in the accomplishments of the Ali’i Battalion, our Ohana, by conducting a Mess Night. We will eat together, we will drink together, we will tell stories (some true and some false). We will emerge at sunrise a more cohesive battalion.

6. Tomorrow, the painful memories will have faded, the good memories that bind us will remain. The bonds of camaraderie are the hardened sinew and fibers of an unbreakable Semper Fidelis; faith rooted in personal spirituality and an organizational commitment through camaraderie.

7. The bonds of camaraderie will allow us to care for one another both in and out of active service. The “Green Mafia” or Marine Corps Family that exists beyond active duty is mighty, made strong by our common experience, and endures in our love for Corps and Country.

B. B. HARRISON

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CO

01Apr17

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON FORCE PRESERVATION

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on force preservation, ultimately the ability of a commander to maintain the combat power of a unit for future conflict.

2. People, as a general rule are the focus of force preservation, however, other resources can be the subject of a commander’s concern for preservation of combat power. Availability of vehicles, weapons, fuel, ammunition, transportation, etc...are all of concern when considering combat readiness.

3. In the day-to-day rhythm of an artillery battalion, we concern ourselves with the physical accountability of personnel, their physical and mental health, fitness, training, and family readiness. These factors contribute to both combat effectiveness (skill to fight) as well as their combat readiness (will to fight). Our combat power combines both skill and will.

4. Preserving the potential of our people

a. Training. Attainable, realistic training where leaders have the freedom to develop and personnel have the opportunity to grow in skill level while being assessed individually and as a unit provides the greatest source of force preservation. Train hard, bleed less, and win.

b. Medical and Dental Readiness. Wholeness of body ensures a person is capable of deploying. Physical Health Assessments help to identify and address health issues. Light Duty and Limited Duty programs aim to return sick and injured personnel to full duty or separate them in order to gain a healthy replacement.

c. Physical Fitness. Personnel who are physically fit not only are more likely to be present for training and deployment, but are also better equipped mentally and emotionally to endure the stresses of combat and leadership. Individual fitness helps prevent unnecessary injury. Unit PT raises individuals, and builds unit integrity/camaraderie.

d. Spiritual Fitness. Belief in something bigger than one’s self (God, Family, Country, Corps, Unit). A solid sense of One’s self, One’s purpose, and One’s place in life is critical to contentment. This is the foundation of resiliency.

e. A House in Order. Family, friendships, and finances can be a source of strength and a source of stress, making us strong or weak. Marines need to ensure that they can deploy and maintain focus with ease of mind. In garrison, these factors influence availability, performance, and professionalism. A house in disarray is often the cause of bigger problems. Strive to balance work and family obligations, and demonstrate this to your Marines and Sailors through your own actions.

5. The failure of an individual and unit to balance the elements of personnel preservation will result in risk and ultimately a loss of combat power. Personnel will suffer distraction, anxiety, physical and mental anguish, legal and administrative burden, leading to a loss of skill and will to fight.

6. Our job as leaders is to know our Marines and Sailors, to gauge their strengths and weaknesses, and to coach, mentor, and lead them to be personally accountable for their own readiness. This is small unit business.

7. Our job at higher headquarters is to provide counsel, make assessments of the whole Marine or Sailor, and provide access to the resources necessary to support small unit leadership.

8. Force Preservation Resources

a. Command Team. Commanders are ultimately responsible for knowing and caring for their personnel. The team provides support and advice.

b. Force Preservation Council. The collective consisting of unit command teams, Medical Officer, OSCAR, Chaplain, Military Family Life Counselor, Family Advocacy, Military Intervention Program, Substance Abuse Control Officer and counselors, and Violence Prevention Officer that is responsible for assessing risk in personnel and triaging resources to support small unit leadership. The purpose of the FPC is to de-escalate problems before they negatively alter or end a Marine or Sailor’s life.

c. Leadership Triage Training. Battalion directed semi-annual training designed to raise awareness among small unit leaders regarding personnel issues, available resources, and to aid them in decision making.

d. Limited Duty Board. The CO/XO, SgtMaj, Battery Command Teams, Medical Officer, and Limited Duty Coordinator who oversee the assignment, tracking, and care of sick and injured Marines and Sailors requiring complex medical care and/or who have exceeded 90 days of light duty for a single condition. The purpose of this board is to return personnel to a full duty status.

e. Medical Evaluation Board. The body of Naval Officers and SNCOs who advise the Assistant Commandant on the suitability of sick and injured personnel who no longer are deemed fit for service due to a significant medical condition. The purpose of this board is to separate personnel with disabilities so they may be cared for outside of service and so the service can replace them with an able bodied member.

f. Family Readiness Council. The collective of commanders, senior enlisted advisors, Family Readiness Officer, and Single Marine and Sailor Program Coordinator. The purpose of this council is to allocate resources for the care of married and single Marines and Sailors.

g. Religious Ministries Team. The Chaplain, Religious Programs (RP) Specialist, and battery lay leaders who care for the spiritual fitness of the battalion, provide counsel, and oversee the execution of the Combat Operational Stress Program.

h. Marine Corps Counseling Services (MCCS). Family Advocacy, Military Intervention Program, Substance Abuse Counseling Program, etc...who provide assessment, counseling, and inpatient/outpatient services; contributing to the spiritual, physical, and mental wellbeing of service members and their families. Whether single or married, MCCS helps our people keep their house in order. Command Teams must be engaged to ensure personnel are properly assessed and supported.

i. Marine Corps Community Services. Marine Corps Base activities that provide physical, mental, and spiritual fitness through recreation and off-duty activities. These benefit both the individual and the unit.

9. There is no single inoculation that will protect a Marine or Sailor from fatigue, stress, injury, disease, or a mishap. People are complex. Their problems, however, can be simplified; especially if dealt with early by caring and compassionate leaders. Get ahead of the issue. Simplify problems. De-escalate situations. Reduce stress. Manage stressors in order to solve problems.

10. Force Preservation is reliant on personal accountability and engaged leaders. We need every one of the 666 Marines and Sailors on our Table of Organization to win. We are normally staffed to a degree, somewhere between 650 and 670 personnel at any given time. The Marine on legal hold or Limited Duty is not fully deployable. The Marine going through a divorce is not focused on work. The Marine with alcohol or drug dependency may not have the skill to fight. The Marine with separation anxiety or dissociative disorder may not possess the will to fight. The Marine who commits suicide is no longer present and leaves emotional scars in our unit. All of these detract from our combat power. Our responsibility as leaders is to identify compromised personnel, get them help, bolster them while they heal, and return them to full duty. If unwilling or unable, our responsibility is to remove them from our unit so we can replace them with new and capable members. Never give up on a Marine or Sailor who is going through a rough patch. This is your most critical opportunity to lead, coach, and mentor.

We must be combat ready and combat effective when we are tested. Protect what you’ve earned and preserve our family.

B. B. HARRISON

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON SPIRITUALITY

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on spirituality. It is meant to help leaders understand my spiritual underpinnings, to learn to communicate their own, and to encourage Marines and Sailors to take stock of their place in our world, and their own significance.

2. I was raised in a house divided, where my Mom insisted we attend Episcopal liturgical services as part of our development, and my Pop only attended on major holidays. The irony is that my Mom was not particularly religious and my Pop was exceptionally spiritual.

3. My Mom stopped going to church when I was a teenager. She never spoke much of spiritual health. My Pop on the other hand often spoke of spirituality, even though he continues to possess disdain for organized religion. Mom saw the moral and ethical advantages of the religious community. Pop, who does not believe in religion, believes strongly in God. From my Mom we learned about Christianity, religious discipline, and came to understand the support and care that comes from a faith-based church community. Pop would rather take us on a strenuous early morning hike, deep into the Appalachian Mountains than go to church. Sitting on a jagged outcropping of rock, eating our breakfast as the sun exploded over the horizon, illuminating the world below as the valley fog burned away; Pop would sit spellbound and simply say, “Can you imagine such wonder without a God”. Pop taught us to be spiritual in his own way.

4. To me, neither is right or wrong in their views. I’ve come to balance my concepts of faith, religion, and my place in the world between the known and unknown. Science tells us much, but not everything. Faith assumes much, sometimes too much. Spirituality is how I’ve come to terms with what we think we know and what we don’t understand.

5. What I believe:

a) Being spiritual does not mean you have to be religious. There are plenty of atheists in fox holes who feel spiritually connected to their fellow Marine and even the virtual religion of the Marine Corps.

b) God is mysterious, great, and powerful. Humanity is not. Humankind’s great struggle has been to define and understand God. We attempt to accomplish this through religious study and the scientific method. Spirituality gives us humility to do so.

c) Religion is dictated by a community. Faith is personal, even when connected to religion. People must come to terms with their religious ideals and their sense of faith on their own terms, and be confident in their beliefs.

d) Spirituality has to do with a sense of self and one’s role in the world. Spirituality has allowed me to be comfortable being uncomfortable, content to do what the Marine Corps tells me to do and to go where the Marine Corps tells me to go, and accepting that not everything has to be explained, or even lead to certainty. Spirituality strengthens my faith.

e) Marine spirituality is born of extreme circumstances, forged in the crucible of entry level training, effective units, and combat. It is earned through sweat and sacrifice, and often blood. Events that stress and test us make us closer and cement our place in Corps and history.

***Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering if they made a difference in the world. But, the Marines don't have that problem.***   
Ronald Reagan, President of the United States; 1985

6. Marines practice an extreme form of faith and spirituality. The warrior ethos requires that we place our faith in others in training and combat; entrusting our mission and very lives. These warriors are no mere strangers, they are Marines and Sailors. They are formed and grow from a common experience; Recruit Training Regiment, military academies, Officer Candidate School. They serve in storied units with almost mythical histories and cultish legacies. This legacy creates a spiritual bond to our past which we honor through commitment to the future. Courage holds us true to our legacy. Spirituality among Marines is enduring, hence the mantra “Once a Marine, Always a Marine”.

7. Marines can be religious and still be spiritually connected to the Marine Corps regardless of faith background. I can be a good Christian, a faithful husband and father, and still be spiritually anchored to the Marine Corps. In fact the Corps’ values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment lend themselves well to being a good spouse and parent.

8. Regardless, Marines need to believe in something bigger than themselves. They need to understand that they matter. They are consumable in combat, replaceable over the long-term, and temporarily active for periods of 4 to 40 years. Still, the loss of a Marine is agonizing. A Marine is not immediately replaceable, causing a significant gap in a unit for a long duration. Even career Marines who retire leave a deficit of leadership, experience, and knowledge when they depart the active ranks. There is life after the Marine Corps. The Honor, Courage, and Commitment of Marines is valued in the civilian world and by our families and should be protected for that eventuality of separation that all Marines face at some point.

9. If we can get Marines to maintain the spiritual connection they established with the Marine Corps when they received the Eagle, Globe, and Anchor; they will value their own contributions, fulfill their commitments courageously, and will honor the Corps’ legacy in doing so forever.

10. Protect what you’ve earned. Protect what we’ve earned.

B. B. HARRISON

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CO

08May17

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON RISK

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on risk, and more importantly the leader’s role in managing risk through decision making.

2. Risk is an element of everything we do as Marines and Sailors. There is no perfect and safe solution.

3. Our purpose as leaders is to prepare personnel, organize effective units, and make decisions related to war. Each of these requirements demand balance. Balance requires focus and sacrifice, and therefore risk.

1. For example: If we seek to achieve Dental Readiness of 95%, then 3-7% of our force will statistically be non-deployable at any time.
2. If we seek to achieve 100% Dental Readiness, the level of focus and effort may require sacrificing some other element of Combat Readiness.
3. A leader must determine if the focus and effort to achieve 100% Dental Readiness is worth the corresponding drop in another area.
4. Furthermore, the leader has a responsibility to communicate the decision and associated risk to subordinates, HHQ, and other supported units.

4. Leadership decisions must assess risk and reward. This often requires leaders to look beyond the immediate impacts of a decision.

1. For example: If the unit conducts a Dental stand-down, then mechanics will not be able to perform corrective maintenance and therefore our maintenance status of Mission Essential Equipment is likely to drop below acceptable levels.
2. The first order effects are a rise in Dental Readiness and a drop in Material Readiness.
3. The second order effects could be that more mechs/techs are available to deploy, spend less time receiving emergency dental work, and more personnel are therefore available on a daily basis to work.
4. The third order effects could be that because the Marine was allowed to take care of preventative dental exams and cleanings, that they feel the leadership is concerned with their welfare, and therefore more willing to work extended hours and more likely to re-enlist.

5. Leadership decisions require different tools to assess risk. Each requires critical thought to make the best decision.

1. Through the Marine Corps Planning Process (MCPP), leaders strive to understand the problem; problem framing, preparation of the battlespace, COA development, war gaming, and continuous assessment throughout planning, orders development, and execution. These efforts are meant to create understanding, validate assumptions, make sound judgments, and ensure that expected outcomes are accomplished. This inevitably leads to the next series of decisions and eventually realization of the commander’s end-state.
2. The Risk Assessment Matrix is a tool designed to conduct Risk Assessment, formerly Operational Risk Management (ORM). This tool identifies threats, rates risks, assigns risk mitigation measures; ultimately aiding leaders in tailoring a plan, policy, or measure to address the threats and minimize risk through controls.

* This tool is USELESS if employed with a “cut and paste” mindset. Approach every evolution as a novel event.
* The Risk Assessment Matrix (RAM) must be translated to the lowest level of leadership, to the person performing the task, and must be supervised to ensure success.
* For example: The RAM should be employed during Pre-combat checks and Pre-combat inspections in real terms relevant to the participants of the mission. Ideally, the RAM is validated during unit rehearsal, updated as necessary, and constantly assessed throughout the mission.

6. Keys to risk management in our battalion.

1. Employment of a learning organization.
2. Consistent leadership development of all ranks.
3. Balanced management of individual and unit life.
4. Individual accountability for combat readiness.
5. Unit preparedness for combat (Strength in Unity).
6. Sound operations planning and staff integration.
7. Focus on standards-based training.
8. Caring and concerned leaders who are engaged with their Marines and Sailors at their level.
9. Open and transparent communication.
10. Encouragement of ‘loyal dissent’.

7. Food for Thought.

a. ‘Loyal Dissent’: By [Douglas Satterfield](http://www.theleadermaker.com/author/doug-satterfield/) | December 13, 2013.

- http://www.theleadermaker.com/loyal-dissent/

b. ‘Gender as a moderator of relation between emotional intelligence and career development’, Samuel Olayinka Salami. US-China Education Review, September 2010, Volume 7, No.9

- http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED514713.pdf

c. ‘Managing Risk – A New Framework’: By Robert S. Kaplan and Anette Mikes. Harvard Business Review, June 2012.

- https://hbr.org/2012/06/managing-risks-a-new-framework

8. The greatest tool I have at my disposal as a commander to manage risk is a subordinate leader who seeks to do the right thing, who is loyal to the Marine Corps both on and off duty, who provides the commander candid advice, and who aggressively pursues the objective of the mission with purpose.

B. B. HARRISON

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CO

24Oct17

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON RESPONSIBILITY

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on responsibility and the role of the Marine Corps leader in mission accomplishment.

2. With great power comes great responsibility; Stan Lee wrote this in his Spider Man comic. Peter Parker became Spider Man out of a sense of responsibility for his fellow man because he had great powers imbued upon him accidentally. In return, the population of New York gave him his authority. Responsibility is commensurate with authority. When he abused his responsibilities, they took away his authority.

3. We each assumed responsibility intentionally out of service to our Nation. Our authority is our legitimate power as defined by Title 10 of U.S. Code relating to the roles and responsibilities of the Armed Forces of the United States. This authority is founded in the Constitution and is drawn from the will of the governed. While not a super human power, your power as a servant of the Nation and leader of Marines and Sailors is great, resident in your authority, and derived from laws. Protect your authority.

4. The authorities of every leader flow from those of the Commander. For example, the DNCO, AOOD and OOD all possess the authorities of the Battalion Commander in accordance with orders. They are direct representatives and should be respected as such within their role as the interior guard force for the Battalion Command Post, barracks, and Battalion facilities as designated by Marine Corps Base Hawaii. The Battalion Executive Officer is often granted ‘Acting’ authority and others are granted ‘By Direction’ authorities as required to ensure the continuity of command is maintained. Billeted and non-billeted leaders within the Battalion possess authorities commensurate with their rank as well as position. The sub-delegation of authority is necessary to allow the Commander to function. While authority may be delegated, responsibility remains with the Commander.

5. Accountability and discipline are tightly interwoven with responsibility. Accountability holds us responsible for our actions. Discipline ensures we hold true to our values and responsibilities. We are responsible for life, death, and mission accomplishment. Discipline governs our conduct. Accountability prevents carelessness in our pursuit of mission accomplishment.

6. Disciplined application of our values of Honor, Courage and Commitment hold us true to our responsibilities to our Nation, Corps, and unit. Our personal interests and responsibilities to our friends and family are second to our oath. We hold ourselves accountable to these values individually, as a Corps, and by our leaders through the UCMJ, laws, and regulations.

7. Leaders model our values. Leaders are responsible for upholding Honor, Courage, and Commitment to our Nation. Leaders hold one another accountable to our oaths. Leaders are disciplined in thought, word, and action. Leaders place the requirements of the Nation before their own interests.

8. Marines are leaders. Marines seek responsibility, are disciplined, and accountable. Do the right thing always.

B. B. HARRISON

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CO

01Feb17

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines

To: 1st Battalion, 12th Marine Regiment

Subj: PERSPECTIVES ON RESILIENCY

1. This memo constitutes my thoughts on resiliency and serves to inform our Marines, Sailors, and families.

2. In a word, resiliency is toughness. A resilient Marine is physically and mentally tough, grounded morally and spiritually, and able to absorb the shocks and adversity experienced throughout life.

3. Service as a Marine is demanding; we are never off-duty and must always maintain the core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment. This demands servitude and therefore deprivation and sacrifice. This constant vigilance can diminish our resiliency.

4. We all come from different backgrounds, respond to adversity differently, and are characterized by varying degrees of toughness. While the Marine Corps provides us a common baseline through entry-level training, 13 weeks does not replace 18 to 22 years of development prior to service. For many of us, being resilient is a daily struggle.

5. The following are some questions all Marines must ask themselves. Our answers, and more importantly how we feel about the answers should inform our understanding of our toughness:

a. Am I mentally, physically, and spiritually ready to deploy tonight?

b. Am I prepared to sacrifice everything I care about in my life?

c. Am I prepared to actively kill another human being in combat?

d. Am I prepared to fail my fellow Marine, and for them to die?

e. Can I survive combat and thrive, or will I perish?

6. There are numerous ways to prepare our Marines to answer these questions in the affirmative and remain whole.

a. Instill a sense of service to a higher ideal. God, Country, Corps, Family, Unit.

b. Be right with your creator. Be right with your tribe. Be right with your family.

c. Honor our code. Semper Fidelis!

d. Form teams and force them to rely on one another, then reform them around sound leadership when they break up. Do this again. Unit life-cycle.

e. Prepare your family to live without you.

f. Learn to be comfortable being uncomfortable.

g. Develop habits of thought and action that breed success.

h. Set high but obtainable standards.

i. Treat every training evolution as your last combat rehearsal.

j. Imbue a sense of humor, dark humor, the kind where you can joke about your own adversity and laugh when the going gets tough.

k. Honor your fallen; make peace with your memories.

l. Tell yourself you can win, believe you can win, WIN. Self-affirmation.

7. LTC Dave Grossman, USA (ret.) speaks about conditioning in his book “On Combat”. The ultimate goal of military leadership is to train a person to kill the enemy without hesitation. The decision to pull the trigger is made with the knowledge that killing the enemy is right. This knowledge is given with permission by the leader in advance of the action. This permission is what enables to Marine to live with wholeness of mind and spirit.

8. We discuss building resiliency in our Marines, but we don’t often discuss building resiliency in ourselves as leaders. Our Marines’ greatest source of resiliency comes from us as leaders, therefore we must be strong and whole.

“The mass needs, and we give it, leaders who have the firmness and decision of command proceeding from habit and an entire faith in their unquestionable right to command as established by tradition, law and society”

– Ardant du Picq *Battle Studies*

a. Giving up the moral imperative of leadership, failing to maintain standards of the Marine Corps, violating the law, giving in to fear, asking our Marines to do what we would not do ourselves is surrender. Our surrender contributes directly to our Marines being less resilient. Demonstrating what is good and right makes our warriors strong in mind, spirit, and body.

9. Readings you should consider when discussing resiliency with our Marines and Sailors.

- *Warrior Mindset*. Michael J. Asken, Ph.D.

- *On Combat*. LTC Dave Grossman, USA (ret.)

- *The Passion of Command*. Colonel B.P. McCoy, USMC (ret.)

- *Black Hearts*. Jim Frederick. Effects of failed leadership in combat.

- *Tiger Force*. Michael Sallah. Effects of failed leadership after combat.

- <https://www.resiliency.com>; Nan Henderson. M.S.W. President

Take the Resiliency Quiz. Gauge your level of resiliency.

- <http://mariashriver.com/blog/2014/12/10-ways-to-build-resilience-in-the-face-of-adversity-family-affaires/>

- *Promoting Psychological Resilience In The Military*. The Rand Corporation. <http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2011/RAND_MG996.pdf>

- *Stress and Resilience In The US Marine Corps*. Frank J. Tortorello, Jr.

<https://www.mca-marines.org/gazette/2014/06/stress-and-resilience-us-marine-corps>

- U.S. Army Resilience Website. <https://www.army.mil/readyandresilient/>

10. Tasks: Engage your personnel on the topic of resiliency as you address the six pillars of Marine Corps Leadership Development; Fighter, Fitness, Finance, Family, Fidelity, and Future. Use physical training, readings, lectures, small unit discussions, and guest speakers to engage them. Address individual resiliency during counseling and mentorship. Assess your own resiliency, and harden yourself to lead.

B. B. HARRISON