



United States Marine Corps
Lejeune Leadership Institute



LtGen John A. Lejeune: Special Trust and Confidence

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The special trust and confidence which is expressly reposed in each officer by his commission is the distinguishing privilege of the officer corps. It is the policy of the Marine Corps that this privilege be tangible and real; it is the corresponding obligation of the officer corps that it be wholly deserved.

Commanders will ensure that local policies, directives, and procedures reflect the special trust and confidence reposed in each member of the officer corps. Full credit will be given to his statements and certificates, he will be allowed maximum discretion in the exercise of authority vested in him, and he and his dependents will be accorded all prerogatives and perquisites which are traditional and otherwise appropriate. Except where the security of classified material and installations impose more stringent demands, an officer's uniform will amply attest his status as an officer, and his oral statement will serve to identify him and his dependents.

As a concomitant, commanders will impress upon all subordinate officers the fact that the presumption of integrity, good manners, sound judgment, and discretion, which is the basis for the special trust and confidence reposed in each officer, is jeopardized by the slightest transgression on the part of any member of the officer corps. Any offense, however minor, will be dealt with promptly, and with sufficient severity to impress on the officer at fault, and on his fellow officers, the effects of the offense on the stature and reputation of the officer corps. It is an obligation to the officer corps as a whole, and transcends the bonds of personal friendship.

As a further and continuing action, commanders are enjoined to bring to the attention of higher authority, referencing this paragraph, any situation, policy, directive, or procedure which contravenes the spirit of this paragraph, and which is not susceptible to local correction.

Although this policy is expressly concerned with commissioned officers, its provisions and spirit will, where applicable, be extended to noncommissioned officers, especially staff noncommissioned officers.

