



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

HEADQUARTERS AND SUPPORT BATTALION
MARINE CORPS BASE
BOX 555031
CAMP PENDLETON, CA 92055-5031

IN REPLY REFER TO:
1000
S-3
4 Nov 13

POLICY LETTER 7-13

From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution List

Subj: BATTALION'S PROFESSIONAL READING PROGRAM & QUARTERLY ESSAY CONTEST

Ref: (a) ALMAR 001/13

Encl: (1) Commandant's White Letter NO. 4-12

1. Situation. To implement policies and provide instructions for coordinating the Battalion's Professional Reading Program. ALMAR 001/13 officially established the Professional Reading Program and directed its implementation into the existing PME program of every command/unit.

2. Mission. To comply with the reference and reinforce both policies and instructions for Headquarters and Support Battalion's Professional Reading Program.

3. Execution. Company Commanders will ensure the tasking is fulfilled in accordance with the reference.

a. Concept of Operation and Commander's Intent. To enhance the Warrior ethos of our beloved Corps, encourage critical thinking, and broaden the understanding of our current operating environment. In compliance with the reference, this Order contains information to develop the Battalion Professional Reading Program. My ultimate objective is that every Marine thoroughly comprehends this policy and complies with its contents.

b. Tasks.

(1) Company Commanders of Alpha, Bravo, and H&S

(a) Track progress of all eligible CPRL books; read them, ensure compliance and constructive discussions to ensure professional growth of their Marines.

(b) Ensure Small Unit Leadership is conducting Professional Military Education (PME) sessions for Marines; ideally PME's will be conducted on Thursday afternoons.

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(2) S-3

(a) Ensure all companies are maintaining updated rosters for Marines who have read eligible books.

(b) Ensure widest dissemination of this Order to all personnel and post copies on all bulletin boards.

c. Coordinating Instructions. Small Unit leadership PME. Conduct separate talks with Officers, SNCOs, and NCOs, to stress importance of small unit leadership, leader-led and guided discussions, and adherence to the in-depth reading and constructive learning of books contained on the Commandant's Professional Reading List (CPRL).

4. Administration and Logistics.

a. Company Commanders, Officers In Charge, Staff Non-Commissioned Officer's and Non-Commissioned Officer's are instructed to comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy and the reference.

b. H&S Bn S3 Office has books available for check-out. The books on the CPRL are also available at base libraries.

c. The following link has the most current information concerning the CPRL <http://guides.grc.usmcu.edu/usmcreadinglist>

d. Those who write the best essay* in their rank category, on any of the books on the CPRL will receive a CERTCOM and a special day of liberty from me. The rank categories for the competition are as follows:

- (1) LCpls & Below
- (2) NCOs
- (3) SNCOs
- (4) WOs/CWOs
- (5) Company Grade Officers
- (6) Field Grade Officers

* Essays will be evaluated on a quarterly basis.

5. Command and Signal.

a. This policy is effective immediately and applies to all personnel within Headquarters and Support Battalion.

b. Direct any questions to either your Company leadership or the Bn S3 section at 760-725-5050.

SEMPER FIDELIS,



MICHAEL E. CORDERO
COLONEL USMC



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

IN REPLY REFER TO:

CMC-MCTI
NOV 27 2012

WHITE LETTER NO. 4-12

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: All Marines

Subj: READING IN THE MARINE CORPS... "THIRTY YEAR OLD BODY AND
5000 YEAR OLD MIND"

Encl: (1) Commandant's Professional Reading List, 08 Nov 12

1. In 1989, General Al Gray promulgated the first Commandant's Reading List and challenged Marines of every rank to re-dedicate themselves to the study of their profession. Our twenty-ninth Commandant clearly understood that the development and broadening of the mind is a critical aspect of the true warrior's preparation for battle. General Gray viewed reading as a means of preparing for the future, and combat in particular. He ensured that his Marines knew he considered mental preparation as important as physical conditioning or even MOS training.

2. The introduction of that first list was a milestone in the history of our Corps. It represented an important and useful manifestation of the professional study that has always characterized us as Marines. The idea of Marines diligently pursuing the profession of arms by reading on their own has resonated inside and outside the Corps. Comparing themselves to the most professional military organizations throughout history, Marines take great pride in being part of a thinking and learning organization. The emphasis on thoughtful reading has stood us in good stead over the last 11 years. The adaptation and flexibility shown by Marines faced with a variety of different situations and challenges was anchored in many years of mental preparation for combat.

3. Over recent years I have become increasingly concerned that Marines are not reading enough anymore. Many are not reading at all. This has happened for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, the last 11 years of continuous combat in Iraq and Afghanistan have been characterized by a high operational tempo that made extraordinary demands on time. Under the pressure of competing requirements, reading was one of the first things to

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go. For all practical purposes it has been gone for years. Our senior leaders have not emphasized the importance of reading.

4. Faced with a period of fiscal austerity and an uncertain world, it's more important now than ever before to dedicate time to read and to think. As we prepare ourselves for whatever is to come, the study of military history offers the inexpensive chance to learn from the hard-won experience of others, find a template for solving existing challenges, and avoid making the same mistakes twice. As it was once wisely put, reading provides a "better way to do business... it doesn't always provide all the answers... but it lights what is often a dark path ahead." Any book thoughtfully read sharpens the mind and improves on an individual's professional potential.

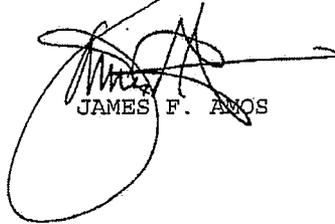
5. Whatever has caused our emphasis on reading to atrophy, we as Marines and as leaders, need to restore its preeminence at every level. The Marine Corps will return to its roots as an organization that studies and applies the lessons of history. The attached Commandant's Professional Reading List represents an updated version of those books most pertinent to the development of professional skills at each level. I have personally reviewed it, and made both deletions and additions. It forms the core of an expanded professional military education program that I expect to be overseen by Commanding Officers and unit leaders at every level. Every Marine will read at least three books from the list each year. All books listed at each level of rank are required, while the books listed under categories are recommended readings to expand understanding in specific areas. The list represents only a starting point, and will ideally whet the appetite for further reading and study. Commanders and senior enlisted will reinvigorate the critical emphasis on reading in their units and develop a unit reading program. Books will be selected for reading and discussion, with time set aside in the schedule to that end. The idea that true professionals study their profession all the time - not just in PME schools - will continue to be a strongly emphasized theme in all of our professional schools...officer and enlisted.

6. This letter represents only the first installment in this effort. On 1 January, a follow-on ALMAR will be published that provides further detail. I have also directed that specific guidance be promulgated that ensures that item G-1 (Professional

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Military Education) in the fitness report is being used to accurately describe a Marine's dedication to the pursuit of life-long learning.

7. Let me end by saying that I am well aware that much has been asked of our leadership in recent years - some may see this as yet another requirement. I ask that this white letter not be taken in that light. Reading is a critical continuing action. We need to find the time for it just as we find time weekly for individual and unit physical conditioning. What I am calling for is nothing less than a renewal of a critical aspect of our commitment to the profession of arms.



JAMES F. AMOS

*Marius... the study of our
Profession is "what we do" - it
tells all... "who we are!"*