



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
2 NAVY ANNEX
WASHINGTON, DC 20380-1775

IN REPLY REFER TO:
5000
CMC
09 DEC 2002

WHITE LETTER NO. 12-02

From: Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: All General Officers
All Commanding Officers
All Officers in Charge

Subj: HOLIDAY SEASON CLEMENCY

1. As the Holiday season approaches, it is a time for rejoicing by all Marines, Sailors and their families.
2. In keeping with the spirit of the season, I encourage all commanders to review the cases of Marines and Sailors who are being punished for their misconduct, whether adjudged by court-martial or imposed by NJP. I encourage you, after considering the offender and the circumstances of the offense, to consider the exercise of your powers of clemency where you judge it to be appropriate.
3. Should you choose to avail yourself of this authority, you would, in my view, be sending a strong message to all who doubt our resolve to defeat the "zero defects" mentality by which we are sometimes characterized. Forgiveness and compassion are an intrinsic part of being a successful leader. Where appropriate, a second chance for a deserving Marine will never hurt the institution. Quite often, the reverse is true.
4. Thank you for considering this thought; clemency has its place in our history, we just don't hear about it any more.

Semper Fidelis,


J. L. JONES