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Director's Comments

By BGen S.T. Johnson

*Director, Manpower Plans and Policy
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Commanders and leaders at all levels work hard to create environments where equal opportunity exists for their Marines and Sailors—environments where all hands are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness. While equal opportunity is fundamental to the way the Corps does business, ensuring that equal opportunity flourishes still requires leadership and supervision. Marines who assist commanders in these matters are designated Equal Opportunity Advisors (EOAs). They are dedicated Marines whose principal goal is to support their commanders in making their units and organizations more mission ready. They deserve our recognition and thanks.

EOAs assist our Commanding Generals and Commanding Officers in several key ways. Monitoring the organizational climate, identifying trends and areas of concern, and suggesting methods for improving the climate are a few key areas where the EOA's knowledge and training come into play. They also provide guidance and instruction on all command investigations alleging discrimination, to include sexual harassment. They are also responsible for providing training for unit equal opportunity representatives (EORs). The EOR, in

turn, provides equal opportunity assistance and training to the Marines and Sailors in the unit.

Leadership by example is key – Marine Corps leaders at all levels establish the standard for those they lead. Equal opportunity is not a program, nor is it a collateral duty tasked to one individual in a unit. Again, equal opportunity is leadership, plain and simple, and it is everyone's responsibility. *Semper Fidelis.*

Branch Head's Comments

By Col A.X. Butler

*Head, Manpower Equal Opportunity
Branch*

(Note: Colonel Butler retired in May as the Head of the Manpower Equal Opportunity Branch. These were his parting comments. The Branch would like to thank him for his vision and leadership over the last 11 months.)

What does Equal Opportunity mean to our Corps? We believe that the cornerstone of equal opportunity is derived from the Preamble to our Constitution:

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain

and establish the Constitution for the United States of America.”

To form a more cohesive Corps of Marines, focused and determined to accomplish its mission, we must:

Establish justice as a leadership trait for all Marines.

Ensure tranquility, teamwork, and trust among all Marines, so when we go into battle we are of one heart, one mind, and one spirit.

Provide for the defense of our Nation by ensuring that we are so highly trained, so highly motivated, that no enemy can defeat us.

Promote the welfare of all Marines so that they feel like a part of the Corps.

Secure the blessings of liberty and fairness for all Marines, regardless of race, gender or ethnic background.

Ask yourselves how you can improve the climate of the Corps. Are you a part of the problem or a part of the solution to making the Corps better? When you take your unit into harm’s way, will they all be of one heart, one mind, and one spirit? If so, great! If not, make it so—and do it now!

What can you do to improve the organizational climate as it relates to racial, ethnic and gender issues? First acknowledge that racial, ethnic, and gender discrimination and harassment exists. Resolve to call people on racist, ethnic, and sexist comments, acts, and symbols whenever you see or hear them. Understand that trust is not always given easily, it must be earned. After saying or doing something wrong or insensitive, hang in there and deal with it. But above all, listen to your Marines.

As it relates to racial, ethnic, cultural, and gender harmony within our Corps, I leave you with the ungrammatical

truth of an old preacher: “Lord, we ain’t what we ought to be, We ain’t what we wanna be, We ain’t what we gonna be, But thank God, we ain’t what we was.”

Progress has surely been made, but much still remains to be accomplished. Stay focused, have fun and take care of our Marines. ♣

1999 Marine Corps Climate Survey Results

(The following article was adapted from MARADMIN 170/00)

The 1999 Marine Corps Climate Survey (MCCS, MCCS-R) measures active duty and reserve members’ experiences as they relate to organizational climate issues, equal opportunity, and sexual harassment. The survey was administered to a random sample of Marine Corps personnel—11,681 active duty and 7,888 reservists—stratified by racial/ethnic group and gender within enlisted and officer populations. The response rates were 37 percent for active duty and 33 percent for reserves.

The MCCS is broken down into two sections, the first looks at ten measures of organizational climate: leadership, unit cohesion, professional development, training, career progression, satisfaction with the Marine Corps, accountability, informal resolution process/request mast, discipline, and extremist groups/gangs. The second section assesses racial/ethnic and gender discrimination, and sexual harassment.

The results indicate both positive results and areas of concern. The positive results are as follows:

- Results from the survey are generally positive, particularly for items assessing leadership, unit cohesion, and satisfaction with the Marine Corps.
- Most indicate that their chain of command treats them fairly, and that they have been given advice by their seniors or supervisors that has helped their professional development.
- Respondents are proud to be Marines, are satisfied with the Corps, and would recommend it to someone with a different racial background.
- Very low percentages are the targets of extremist/hate group/gang activity or recruitment.
- The percentage of active duty personnel who say they experienced racial/ethnic discrimination in the past year decreased.
- Rates of gender discrimination have decreased, particularly for active duty enlisted females.
- Most have received sexual harassment training and understand what words or actions are considered sexual harassment.
- Sexual harassment rates dropped sharply for active duty enlisted and officer

females. For active duty enlisted females, the rates dropped from 42 percent in 1997 to 30 percent in 1999; for active duty female officers, the rates dropped from 20 percent in 1997 to 10 percent in 1999. Reserve females also saw a drop in the rates of sexual harassment; for enlisted, the rates dropped from 26 percent in 1997 to 23 percent in 1999. Female reserve officers reported a drop from 14 percent in 1997 to 5 percent in 1999.

- Most sexual harassment behaviors have decreased and are at the lowest levels since the original Marine Corps equal opportunity survey in 1994.

Areas of concern:

- Leaders are not widely seen as regularly addressing EO or fairness issues. This was true in both the active duty and reserve components, for both enlisted and officers.
- Rates of team Marine training and IRS training, as well as understanding the training, are low.
- Enlisted Marines generally do not view the promotion/advancement system as fair.
- Enlisted Marines experiences do not encourage them to stay in the Marine Corps; small percentage plans to reenlist.
- Little confidence in the request mast process and the fairness of

the complaint process, particularly among enlisted.

- As on previous surveys, black females are least positive on many climate items (e.g., Discipline).
- Despite decreases in racial/ethnic discrimination rates, gaps still exist between minorities and whites; 11 to 19 percent for minorities compared to 3 percent for whites.
- Rates for negative comments and offensive jokes remain relatively high among active duty minority enlisted.

Progress is being made, but as you can see there is a lot of room for improvement. The Marine Corps does two things for this nation: Make Marines and Win Battles. In order to accomplish this, we need to ensure that every Marine is allowed to be a full member of our team. Leaders at all levels, officer and enlisted, must be involved. The issue is one of readiness and the answer is leadership.♣

MPE News

By Capt D.H. Coleman

The Manpower Equal Opportunity Branch has been busy over the last few months with a schedule of minority conferences and command visits. They include:

- Western Pacific Command Visit (February 2-11, 2000)
- Navajo Code Talker Monthly Meeting (March 10-11, 2000)
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium Conference (AIHEC) (April 2-5, 2000)

- National Society of Black Engineers (February 23-27, 2000)
- American Latino Media Arts Awards (ALMA) (April 14-17, 2000)
- Federal Asian Pacific American Council (May 8-12, 2000)

These visits are a continuation of our mission to service and support Marines and their Commanders. The WESTPAC Command Visit was very successful, with over 16 presentations made to a wide variety of audiences. All commanders and their representatives showed considerable interest and there was much useful information exchanged.

One of the concerns raised by the operating forces was the placement of EOAs throughout the operating forces and the need to place them where they can be most effective. The issue of disproportionate areas of responsibility was a concern as well.

Most of the concerns were addressed by MPE, with the following points being reinforced whenever the opportunity arose:

HQMC's stance regarding an increase in EOA structure is—no structure increase. However, we are now conducting a validation of all EOA billets. The purpose is to evaluate the effective use of each EOA in order to ensure these limited assets are located where they can have the most impact and best serve the needs of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps should focus on eliminating the perception that Equal Opportunity is a negative issue. Instead, EO should be viewed as a leadership tool, no different than any of our other leadership tools.

EO is not a minority issue. The demographics of our EOAs unfortunately reinforces this

perception. Action is being taken to review the selection process.

During March, the Division Director, Brigadier General Mattis, along with Captain Coleman, visited the Navajo Code Talkers to continue our ongoing dialogue with them.

Captain Coleman returned to New Mexico in early April for the AIHEC Conference. He conducted a workshop on Native American and Marine Corps culture that featured Sam Tso, a Navajo Code Talker. The local Recruiting Station also setup a booth for the conference's career fair.

1stLt Noveras attended the National Society of Black Engineer's annual conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. He attended with members of Marine Corps Recruiting Command

Mrs. Sosnowski and Captain Coleman attended the ALMA Awards as guests of Recruiting Command. The Awards Show was held in Pasadena, California. The Marine Corps received recognition as a sponsor prior to the Awards show, with Brigadier Generals Cortez and Aguilar present to receive the ALMA award.♣

From the Senior Equal Opportunity Advisor

By MGySgt P. McLane

I want to take this opportunity to share the philosophy that motivates and drives me as an EOA. The first is to make the Marine Corps a better place for tomorrow's Marine; second, the belief that you must educate the many to find the few; third, to adequately assess the command's climate an EOA must continuously conduct regularly

scheduled interactive classes; and last, do what is best for the Corps, not for self.

I won't pretend that being an EOA is easy. It's not. It's by far the most challenging opportunity that I have had in my almost 27 years as a Marine. It is also the most fun I have had. For me there is nothing more motivating and fulfilling than to review the feedback form where a Marine writes, "everyone should attend this class", or, "why haven't we had this class before, it was fun", or my favorite, "I'll be back next month to learn more." And then there's the question on the feedback form that asks what did you learn that you could use on a daily basis. More times than not it was, "I didn't realize that I was doing something wrong and I'll never do it again." That is why I am an EOA and am happy to serve my last tour as the Marine Corps' Senior EOA. It's all about taking care of each other.

And that is my challenge to each of you. Train your Marines and Sailors to be better leaders. Equal opportunity is leadership in action.

Take care of each other, Semper Fi, Master Gunny McLane ♣

Hail and Farewell

The Manpower Equal Opportunity Branch has changed dramatically since the first of the year, with new faces filling almost every seat. Captain Dan Coleman arrived in January to take Captain Reilly's place as the Action Officer for Hispanic and Native American issues. 1stLt John Noveras arrived in March and is looking after African American and Asian-Pacific Islander issues.

MGySgt Pat McLane took over after MGySgt Wilber retired. Corporal Burt replaced Sgt Williams as our Admin Chief. Colonel Butler retired in May and by the end of July we will have a new Branch Head on deck, Colonel W. Clayton Johnson.

On 19 April 2000, five SNCO's graduated from the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) EOA Course. Please take the time to call and welcome them. Pass on any wisdom you have learned on the job to help smooth their transition. Take care of each other.

- MSgt Fernandez MCB Camp Lejeune
- MSgt Keys MCB Kaneohe Bay
- MSgt McNair MCAS New River
- GySgt Jones MCCDC Quantico
- GySgt White 3d MAW

Our sincere appreciation goes out to the EOAs who recently completed their EOA tour and to those that will be departing shortly. Thanks for a job well done and keep spreading the word. Best wishes for continued success.

- MSgt Josypenko MCB Kaneohe Bay
- GySgt Pridgeon MCAS New River
- GySgt Maxwell MCCDC Quantico
- GySgt Bazile 3d MAW
- SSgt Phillips MCAS Miramar

EOA Corner

EOAs, here is a chance to share some of your ideas. Since you are one of the primary audiences for this publication, your insights and ideas should be included. In case you need some inspiration, here are some topics to consider:

"The Importance of the Relationship Between the Chief of Staff, Sergeant Major, Inspector, and EOA"

"Equal Opportunity is Leadership"

"The Value of the Informal Resolution System to the Commander"

"America: Melting Pot or Salad Bowl"

(These articles represent the thoughts and opinions of our Equal Opportunity Advisors and may not necessarily reflect Marine Corps policy.)

There is Nothing Benign About Prejudice

By MSgt Crawford

MARFORRES EOA

In the classic debate about the relationship between attitudes and behaviors, some people argue that attitude change must precede behavior responses. Others believe that it is easier to change a person's behavior first and then let attitude change follow. It is arguable that you cannot force a change in an individual's attitude; individuals must do so themselves. In addition, since behavior can be monitored and controlled, it is considered easier to

change an individual's behavior. Therefore, efforts usually focus on behavior modification. It is time we realize that to achieve lasting change from Marines, who object to change, the attitude must change; otherwise, unmonitored behaviors will revert back to the old manner, especially when the base of power shifts.

Since the early 1970s, Marines have undergone Equal Opportunity (EO) training with the understanding that they could harbor biased attitudes as long as they did not act upon them, thereby affecting others or the organization itself. The underlying assumption was that if the behavior changed, an attitudinal change would naturally follow. However, in too many cases, attitudes have not changed but have manifested themselves and reemerged in covert ways. Of course, behaviors are easier to measure and quantify, but changing attitudes is more important, although obviously more difficult. Human Relations and Affirmative Action Programs have been effective, important steps in opening the government and its hierarchy and making it accessible to all groups. Such programs have fostered a change in behavior, but alone they have not created the conditions that capitalize on the full potential of every employee. What we need is a more open-ended, positive, and future-oriented approach that changes attitudes.

Valuing diversity is such an approach. It is an approach that is responsive to a wide range of people unlike oneself. It includes recognizing that other people's standards and values are often as valid as one's own. Of course I am not supposing that diversity is an unconditional good in itself or that every kind of diversity among people

deserves to be included. There will always be the slackers and the extremists. Nevertheless, valuing diversity is a qualitative model for attitude change. Ethical imperatives drive this culture change.

Ideally, if the behavior changes, the attitude follows; however, it is becoming increasingly obvious that in many cases this has not happened. Instead, those who were forced to change their behavior have simply suppressed their old attitudes, then when in a position in which they are able to subordinate others, former behavior characterized by bias and prejudice has reemerged. This resistance to changing attitudes is due to a fear of change, discomfort with differences, and a desire to continue the "good old days." As we enter the 21st Century, the change transition will be made easier if attitudes are changed along with behavior so that the probability of the lasting change increases. Helping to achieve this lasting change in attitude will be the challenge for EOAs in this new century. ♣



In the News

Marine's Community Involvement Recognized with NAACP's Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award

By Cpl. Adam K. Anderson,

*Tri-Command Tribune (MCAS
Beaufort)*

From behind his gold leaves, crisp cammies and commanding appearance, your first approach might be a bit apprehensive - even intimidating, but as a smile breaks through his military demeanor it's a dead give away - he's nothing but heart.

From his service to America in the world's finest Corps to volunteering with local Beaufort county schools, it's evident Maj. Don M. Thanars, Depot Provost Marshal, dedicates his life to helping the community and its children.

Because of Thanars' commitment to the community, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People recognized him with the NAACP's Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award presented to him at the Armed Services and Veterans Affairs dinner in Baltimore, July 11.

"I've always figured you can either be a part of the problem or a part of the solution," said Thanars. "So I've dedicated myself to bettering the

community and helping children to know what they can do with their future."

Thanars came to Parris Island in August 1997 and has since become a valuable asset to the local military and civilian community, according to Col. Bonnie Robison, H&S Battalion Commander.

"Major Thanars epitomizes those qualities inherent to outstanding citizenship," said Robison. "His efforts as a volunteer play an integral part in the success of many local organizations and help to perpetuate a positive image of the Marine Corps in the surrounding community."

One of his most significant contributions lies in his actions in coordinating the Coming of Age Program. The scope of the program is designed to better equip and prepare the fifth-grade male students at St. Helena Elementary School in making good decisions as they move in to middle school. Thanars has 15 young men currently involved in this program. Each month, a group activity is held and, in the past, has included a visit to a local retirement home, discussion group sessions, church visits and other community involvement. Upcoming activities include a discussion on Martin Luther King Jr., visiting a college and a "boy's night out." The culminating event for the year will be a formal program held at St. Helena Elementary in May 2000. In addition to these events, he also initiated a quarterly newsletter of program activities to keep the members and their parents involved and informed.

For the past two years, Thanars has chaired the Tri-Command Martin Luther King Jr./Black History Month

Congratulations

The following Marines received Meritorious Service Awards from the following organizations:

Federal Asian Pacific American Council -
SSgt Dwight Carlin,
MCAS Beaufort

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People -
Maj Don Thanars,
MCRD Parris Island

National Image, Inc. -
Capt Guillermo Meza Ortega,
HMX - 1
GySgt Carlos Rivera,
MALS-29

Committee. This group of Marines, Sailors, civilians and local community members has sponsored a variety of diverse, educational and entertaining programs that teaches minority and non-minority members about each other's cultures.

Thanars supports integration and promotion of minorities and women within the services by his participation in the Montford Point Marine Association. This veteran's

organization ensures the legacy of the first black Marines is taught to new generations of Marines through Professional Military Education with recruits and local community events such as Veteran's Day programs. In addition, he has also been actively engaged in PME sessions and other initiatives aimed at improving female Marines competitiveness through assignment to leadership roles and encouraging involvement in officer programs.

Under his leadership, the Martin Luther King Jr./Black History Month Committee has provided scholarships to graduating seniors at three local high schools. These seniors compete for these scholarships by submitting a package to the committee that details their academic, community and church involvement.

Thanars further fosters understanding between minority and non-minority members by his position on the Beaufort Chiefs of Police Association. This group meets monthly in an open forum to discuss issues of mutual interests in order to better understand the concerns of all members of both the military and Beaufort community.

Thanars is also involved in numerous community programs to include the Keep America Beautiful Program that helps control the litter on State Highway 170 near the Broad River. He has participated in the program once a month for the past two and a half years.

Additionally, he spearheaded a debutante ball in which formal seminars were conducted to educate young female students in order to provide career alternatives, improve self-esteem and self-respect.

"Through his varied community and military leadership, Thanars has established himself as a person who simply gets things done," states the recommendation prepared to help nominate him for the award. "He fervently believes that all persons are created equal and that each should be afforded the same opportunities to reach their dreams and goals. The Beaufort Community, Tri-Command area and the Marine Corps are extremely fortunate to have a person of Maj. Thanars' drive, determination and caliber. Major Thanars' selection as the 2000 recipient of the Roy Wilkins Renown Service Award can only 'raise the bar' for future nominees."

The Houston, TX native is married to Dinah Cousin with whom he has two daughters.

"Major Thanars has established himself as a leader, mentor and role model who constantly accepts the challenge of key leadership positions in which he can set the example for others to follow," said Robison. ♣

Manpower Equal Opportunity Branch Personnel

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Mrs. Deanna L. Sosnowski

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First Lieutenant John M. Noveras

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