



3 June 2020

Marines and Sailors,

The ongoing unrest in our country is the result of an unspeakable act of injustice and cruelty. It has caused immeasurable pain, anger and even fear. Unfortunately, it is also consistent with part of our collective history that we must overcome as a nation once and for all.

Each of you has answered a call to service by joining the Marine Corps or Navy in order to be part of something bigger than yourself. You have agreed to subordinate your personal interests and comforts for the good of the nation. Our people. All of the people. We all have sworn an oath to the Constitution and the righteous principals contained within it. They provide a vision of who we aspire to be on our best days.

Many of you feel compelled to participate, as citizens, during this historic moment. Done constructively, your personal engagement could prove vital in the pursuit of a better future that includes everyone.

Where to start? To begin with, this is a time to listen. Listen and consider the views of others.

You also have every right to exercise your Constitutional rights as citizens. Because we are professionals, there are specific guidelines that inform the boundaries of our actions. Therefore, lean into your leadership and make sure you understand what is permissible, well in advance.

Leaders, protect your Marines and Sailors and provide the guidance and mentorship required of such moments. Now is the time to coach.

Through it all, remember that each of us have inherited a reputation held in the highest esteem by our people, forged by the sacrifice of Marines and Sailors who preceded us. Our duty is to extend dignity and respect to others regardless of the circumstances. Make no mistake, such lofty standards are the hallmark of our collective discipline and what is expected of us.

Above all else, share your courage and confidence with others and keep your honor clean.

Semper Fidelis,

David G. Bellon  
Lieutenant General, U.S. Marine Corps  
Commander, Marine Forces Reserve