

UNITED STATES ARMY
THE CHIEF OF STAFF

25 Dec 69
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integrity

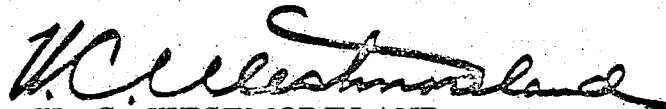
TO THE OFFICERS OF THE ARMY:

These are challenging times for those of us who share responsibility for the leadership of the Army. Faced with severe personnel turnover and reduced levels of experience, we are required more than ever to draw on fundamental principles as guides for our actions. Moreover, today's society provides less support than formerly for traditional values. Thus, the individual officer bears even more responsibility for the establishment and observance of scrupulous, ethical standards.

I want to make it clear beyond any question that absolute integrity of an officer's word, deed, and signature is a matter that permits no compromise. Inevitably, in the turmoil of the times, every officer will be confronted by situations which test his character. On these occasions he must stand on his principles, for these are the crucial episodes that determine the worth of a man.

While basic laws underlie command authority, the real foundation of successful leadership is the moral authority derived from professional competence and integrity. Competence and integrity are not separable. The officer who sacrifices his integrity sacrifices all; he will lose the respect and trust of those he seeks to lead, and he will degrade the reputation of his profession. The good repute of the officer corps is a responsibility shared by every officer. Each one of us stands in the light of his brother officer, and each shares in the honor and burden of leadership. Dedicated and selfless service to our country is our primary motivation. This makes our profession a way of life rather than just a job.

In this uncertain world our best judgments may prove wrong. But there is only one sure path to honor -- unfaltering honesty and sincerity in word and deed. I charge every officer to shoulder his responsibility, as I expect every officer to earn our Nation's trust.



W. C. WESTMORELAND
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

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