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Ethics Paper

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Ethics: Sept 04- May 05

Paper Written 11/27/2006

Class #57

Position held during Ethical Dilemma: 1SG

Abstract

Living by the Army Ethics can some time be very trying. As a Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) I have had my Army and personal ethics challenged many times. I once had a company commander that challenged these ethics on numerous occasions. His actions finally put me in a dilemma to where I had to go to the battalion commander.

Ethics

I was assigned to a unit that was about two months out from deploying to Iraq. The position I held was First Sergeant. My company was leaving about three weeks ahead of the rest of the battalion. We were given the task to sign our barracks over to a medical hold company. I asked the company commander where his hand receipts were so I could start inventorying the barracks. The company commander or prior first sergeant never signed the barracks furniture down to the platoon sergeants, so there were no hand receipts. I got with the supply sergeant and we started inventorying the barracks with the installation hand receipt, once we were complete it came out that the company was missing several thousand dollars worth of equipment. I reported this to the company commander and his response to me was to go steal furniture from another battalion's barracks that was deployed to make up shortages. I just stood there looking at him like he was joking; he asked me if that was a problem. This was the first ethical dilemma that I was put in with this company commander. Bottom line is, it was a huge problem and I was not going to do his dirty work just because he screwed up and did not sub hand receipt his property over. I had a heart to heart with captain and explained that I would not be part of it. The following day the supply clerk and two other soldiers came to my office saying they were approached by this company commander and asked to do the same thing he asked me. The soldiers said they would do it but if they were caught would the company commander and I have their back. I told them not to do anything. I went to the company commander expressed my feeling about what he was asking the soldiers to do. He got upset and slammed his door and tried to chew me out. Bottom line the company commander learned a very expensive lesson. I tried talking to the CSM about the situation with the stealing of barracks furniture but with the tempo of the battalion and the time constraints that we were under I had less than desirable results.

Once deployed for approximately a month and we had been in some serious engagements with the enemy some being two hours long and have been hit with SVBIEDs and IEDs. The soldiers that were wounded were being awarded purple hearts and well deserved. My company commander was envious and would talk about some of the soldiers that did not deserve there purple hearts because maybe they just got peppered with some mortar fragments but were not seriously injured at most they would miss about a week worth of patrols. One patrol we had received some sporadic small arms fire while we were converging onto the location from two different directions where the small arms fire was coming from, the patrol I was in charge of came under an IED attack no one was injured and we drove straight through it and gained contact with the enemy. During the engagement I had eyes on the company commanders patrol and there location. Once we made it back to the FOB and we dropped ramp I could see the company commanders vehicle stop at the aid station, once he got out and took two steps toward the medics he took a knee and grabbed his head and then passed out and came to in about 15 seconds. I thought he might have been shot or something the way he was acting. I made it over to him to here his claim that the IED that blew up my number three vehicle gave him a concussion; my jaw dropped I was in disbelief at this claim he was several hundred yards away from the explosion when it occurred I looked at his crew and grabbed his VC and asked him what happened, he did not know he basically said he started complaining of headaches after the engagement and wanted to be dropped off at the aid station upon there return. The captain stopped by my room wanting me to feel out a witness statement for him so he could receive the Purple Heart award. This was like the fifth ethical dilemma that I was put in since being deployed to Iraq with this company commander. There was no way I could fill the witness

statement out for him. I explained to him I thought he was lying and dishonoring the award and all the soldiers that actually were wounded. He did the old Jim Kerry and got his Purple Heart.

The tour in Iraq continued and I wrote down all the unethical acts that this company commander was doing and they were numerous. I was trying my best to talk with him and hopefully he could see the light. But that was not happening. I told him that the next major event that went down and was shady I was going to go see the BC; the CSM was a lost cause.

We were giving orders shortly after the Purple Heart fiasco to blow a portion of a building up because the Alqueda used it to film an attack on us. During our operations order the company commander gave specifics on how much demo was to be used to destroy the portion of this building. The demo teams gave the company commander what they need but he was very insistent on what he wanted which was way to much explosives, I also interjected that it was way to much demo to do the job the BC wanted done. He basically told us to zip it and do what he was instructing us to do. I pretty much had it with this captain I have worked with him approximately five months with no results. During the mission to blow this portion of the building up, once it was rigged and ready to blow the BC wanted us to stand fast until he checked out what we had. The company commander escorted the BC very proudly up to inspect the site where we had it ready to blow, once the BC seen the amount of explosives we had, he went ballistic he wanted me and the company commander in his office later that night and he also wanted to see the platoon leader and platoon sergeant. That night we all lined up at the BCs door for a butt chewing but that was not why he had us there he was making sure that his intent was being understood. The captain told the BC his intent was completely understood and that the platoon leader and platoon sergeant took it upon them selves to bring that much demo and that he did not understand why they could not follow simple instructions and that he would counsel

them both. I, once again could not believe what I was hearing and the lies the captain was telling about his own men, I was completely disgusted and wanted to reach over and kick the crap out of him. By the way this was the last major event and the last dilemma this captain was going to put me through. I stepped outside the office with the company commander and watched as the platoon leader and platoon sergeant stepped inside the Battalion Commanders office. I will not tell you what happened between me and the company commander on the way back to our TOC because it might incriminate me. Once we made it back to the TOC I told the company commander which was almost in tears that I was going back down to the battalion commanders office and tell him exactly what kind of officer he was.

I went and had my talk with the battalion commander and he ask me what took so long that he had already new and his replacement would be here in three weeks.

Bottom line; if you are ever in a situation like this, don't wait. The faster you can get rid of the bad apple the better your unit will be. The soldiers of my company rejoiced when that captain was sent packing.