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Ethics Paper

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The Effect of the Press Ethics when fighting an Insurgency

“The tradition that all professional soldiers are comrades in arms has persisted to this day. For me, World War II was far too personnel a thing to entertain such feelings. Daily as it progressed there grew with in me the conviction that, as never before the forces that stood for human good and men’s rights were confronted by a completely evil conspiracy with which no compromise could be tolerated.” Dwight D. Eisenhower. Cited in Walser p. 37

A soldiers morals and ethical, as defined by the military is the cornerstone to service in the United States Military today. Polls have been taken to show how well respected the Military is in the eye of the public. Our culture is diverse and with differing values and differing views, attitudes, and norms, but the military values, built on the fabric of what is right and descent in America. It focuses on every soldier to believe in and be part of that soldiers experience while he or she is serving in the United States Military. Irregardless of the individual’s motives or objectives, each soldier must be of sound moral and ethical conviction when coming into the Military essentially knows right from wrong. They must know right from wrong and be able to make the right and ethically sound decisions in the defense of the country and protect their fellow soldiers from situations as well as be able to be sound soldier and leader with the ability to do their job effectively.

In society there is a growing division between the civilian and military establishment in defining what a soldier’s is ethical values. The Military has taken steps to define a value system and an ethical climate to determine the and how leaders and soldiers are dealing with situations with regard to incidents in the press or within their area of influence.

Now it has become woven into the fabric of the soldier’s initial training in the Army.

When the standards are set and adopted in the Military, this can have a tremendous effect

on soldiers with direction and purpose and really define a framework for decisions that can have a profound effect on soldiers and leaders as well as non-combatants. Some soldiers and leaders will see the Military as their calling and others will pursue other avenues on to returning back to society to be productive citizens with the human skill to do the hard right instead of the easy wrong.

Culture and ethnic background is growing and is a prominent part of today military. It is important to understand and value the differences and promote being an American first. Our military is one of very few militaries whose military is not feared by the populous, but instead is celebrated, valued and respected. We must remember our position and realize we are a reflection of various races, religions, and cultures, but we also must remember that we are Americans first. The Military has felt the sting of the public through the media in the past and is becoming more and more evident as the wars that America has fought and ethical calls that are being made by the media which have changed the perception, at times, of the Military. As conflicts have dragged out and played out in every American household. The brutality of war and conflict is more assessable than during World War II.

Conflicts with the advancement of the medias scope of coverage has challenged the American Military and has highlighted the low points, but not really the successes of the good soldiers and leaders, but focused on or the lack there of, as judged by every American citizen right in their comfortable homes. Decisions or a position taken on a snap shot or interpretation of an event without identifying the context or the scope behind the event is ethically unfair. Ethically as an American soldier, I believe in putting something in front of the American people in judging instead of reporting has a

tremendous effect on the American fighting spirit and the will to stay focused on the mission at hand.

In conflict there should be a “take no prisoners” approach to asymmetric warfare. The effect of soldiers dieing, though not to the extent of previous conflicts, will change the public’s opinion as opposed to previous conflicts primarily because of press coverage day in and day out depending on how positive and negative press coverage is. The ROE employed by our forces is markedly ethically softer than the insurgents tactics used to control and influence the populace. The conflict is like the analogy of two teams playing football. The stronger team has strict rules while the weaker team does not have to play by the rules what so ever.

It is important for the American press to realize that most wars, in particular insurgencies, will last a long time and if the press attacks the Military for perceived transgression and not allow the Military handle it internally, it will effect the American citizens support operations and unable to stomach the losses. These facts will gravelly effect the United States Military soldiers and leaders to effectively execute the War on Terrorism. Once the American people loose focus on the strategic goals or the big picture, other adversaries will use the same strategy to defeat the United States in the future. All will be lost and in America, where liberty and Justice for all and the pursuit of personal prosperity will change forever in the world today.

Rather right or wrong ethically the American press must report, but they must understand the ramifications of their reporting has on the opinion and sway over the American citizens and their will to support the War on Extremism in the world.

In conclusion, the ethics and values that the United States Military is teaching and making a part of the Officer and Enlisted Military education system is important, but the American public and the Press must understand that our enemies are not playing by the rules and will never play by the rules. My dad used to tell me “That in War you need to be the biggest and nastiest dog on the block, because if you’re not your enemy has already defeated you.”

References

<http://Carlisle-www.army.usawc/Parameters/00spring/cook.htm>