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The Army is a mirror of our society; it is no different from any other element in our country. The ethics of the Army reflects the ethics of our present day culture. The ethics of the current Czech Armed Forces definitely replicates the principles of the present Czech culture. Globalization has had a profound effect on most countries in the 21st century and the ethics are similar in the developed western states nowadays. Money and possessions are almost above everything else, and our ethics have lost their true meaning. It is crystal clear that the pursuit of material goods is one the most important things in many of the western nations. Money motivates people as well as Soldiers, but also some of the ideas that influence their mentality and decision making process.

The Army exists for one reason and that is to serve our nation. There are several ethical dilemmas influencing the NCO and WO Corps in the Czech Armed Forces today. I will address three of them here; no fair and equal system in the ranks, Soldiers living and serving just for money, and neo-Nazis in the Army.

In 1999, a new Army Act was created and changed the conditions for professional service in the Czech Armed Forces. The changes in the Armed Forces greatly influenced the structure of the both NCO and WO corps and ranks. As a result of this initiative, many Soldiers were promoted overnight. For example, Staff Sergeants were promoted to Sergeant First Class (SFC), SFCs were advanced to Master-Sergeant (MSG), MSGs were given the rank of First Sergeants (1SG), and SFC or MSG who had a secondary education were promoted to Warrant Officer (WO1). Looking back at these decisions I do not think it was a good solution. In the past, many experienced Soldiers, who had served honorably for a long period of time and who had to serve a specific number of years to achieve these higher ranks during their careers, were treated unfairly.

Suddenly, these Soldiers held the same rank as the others who were much younger and had served in the Army for a much shorter period. Moreover, the service rank was based on education level rather merit. For instance, a new recruiter who had earned a secondary school education could be immediately promoted to warrant officer without ever having served in the lower ranks. The changes of the Act are being discussed; unfortunately, there is no political will to generate new legislation at this time. A new law would help us set up new rules for the new ranks, pay grades, and a new promotion system within both NCO and WO Corps. The ethical problem is that the younger Soldiers have not served an appropriate amount of time in the military to warrant these high ranks and some senior Soldiers have felt wronged.

Since the beginning of 2005, the Czech Armed Forces are fully professional and based on voluntary service after 140 years of conscription service. It is an essential reform for the Czech Armed Forces that was launched in 2002. In the case of the Army, serving in this organization is becoming more and more attractive for today's professional soldiers. There are better opportunities in the Army than in the civilian job market. In recent years, the Army has tried to create better work conditions for Soldiers as well as its civilian employees. The average income of Soldiers is about 50% higher than in the civilian sector. The recruitment centers have no problem enlisting potential Soldiers and the Army is fortunate that it can select the best. The motivation to join the Army is generally based on having an interesting and satisfying job, social benefits, and advantages, an opportunity to get a better education. The marks of military service such as order, discipline, organization, and the wear of our uniform are added benefits as well. The chance to improve ones physical condition and a chance to serve in military missions abroad are huge motivation especially for young men. It is an excellent opportunity to earn good money

in a relatively short period of time. The allowances in foreign currencies are one of the major reasons why our Army does not have any problems filling our units that serve abroad.

Back to the ethical dilemma, it is my point of view that, there are still a lot of Soldiers who are solely interested in the money they receive from the foreign missions and do not care about the basic army values which do not concern them. I call this kind of Czech Soldier, “the gold – diggers.” Their religion is money and nothing else matters. Their relationship with the Army exists only through a bank account. They do not care about their education level, their language skills, their additional training, and the future of the Army. On the other hand, they just take advantage of conditions that our Army offers them at the time.

One of the most noteworthy problems today in the Czech Armed Forces is Soldiers, predominantly young NCOs, who sympathize with neo-Nazism. According to latest news from the Czech Republic, there are several neo-Nazis infiltrating Czech Armed Forces. The newspapers have claimed that they have evidence to prove it. There are some pictures from marching and meetings of neo-Nazis in the Czech Republic as well as abroad, where we can recognize members of the elite units of the Czech Armed Forces such as the Rapid response brigade or the Artillery brigade. The experts believe there are a growing number of Soldiers who participate in these meetings as active members. Neo-Nazism is a major concern for our government and our Armed Forces. Military experts point out that Soldiers from the elite units receive first-class sabotage and counter-terrorist training. They are trained in close combat and silent killing, which could be used in clashes with the police.

There is no place for extremists and neo-Nazis in the Army, says the head of the military police, who is responsible for investigation and cooperation with the intelligence service to eliminate this type of extremism. Even if some Soldiers have been under surveillance and

monitoring by the police anti-extremist squads and military counter-intelligence for the last two years, they have been allowed to stay in the Army. It is hard to believe it, but the reason is that we have imperfect laws. In addition, these Soldiers are usually good at training and do not have any troubles with discipline. Because of current Act, the Army cannot afford to kick them out because they are participating in these activities during their spare time. If they do not take part in any criminal activity or break any laws, there is no way to eliminate these people from the Army. Nevertheless, the solution to prevent extremists in the Army exists. Number one could be taking away the security clearances of these individuals, which is essential for Soldiers serving in special or elite units. Soldiers who associate with extremists groups could have their contracts terminated early or given the option to voluntarily leave the service if they continue to participate in the these groups. The best way to protect our Army is to eliminate these people during the recruitment process and select only eligible citizens for service. The senior enlisted and commanders must vigorously pursue the neo-Nazi as well. Great leadership is an efficient and useful tool that should be used to eliminate Soldiers, who are interested in extremism and radicalism.

Conclusion

Soldiers of the Czech Armed Forces as well as Soldiers of other Armies are human beings with both good and bad characteristics. Every Army has some ethics issues, which affect Soldiers serving in conditions established by politicians and authorities responsible for leading our countries. We must admit that our Army is a mirror of the society where we live and work. It is common, that private life, private property, and personal ideas are generally more important for us than national interest or Army values. Our task is to seek a compromise and eliminate

extremism in the Army. Being tolerate, patient, honest, and humble could help us achieve our goals. Full steam ahead...