

MSG Dalton E. Griffith

Student # 586

M-11

Ethics

Young Soldiers at Fort Drum are facing financial problems steaming from the distance they are housed from post. I will address the ethical problem the chain of command (COC) is facing. I will examine the problem and will discuss different courses of actions (COA) to fix the problem.

Fort Drum began transformation at the beginning of the First Quarter of fiscal year 2005. With this transformation the number of Soldiers increased by 33 percent. A huge housing problem came with the transformation due to the numbers of houses compared to the number of Soldiers.

The post housing is scattered through out the local communities. Soldiers who live in these out lying communities use a lot of gas getting back and forth from work. Using the installation facilities is a problem for the spouses and the Soldier as well. Some Soldiers are housed up to 80 miles from the installation. Fort Drum provides a bus for the Soldiers on duty days to get back and forth from their housing to post. If the Soldier has staff duty or charge of quarter on a non duty day, he or she must provide their own transportation. Gas prices are at recorded highs, Soldiers or spouses living 80 miles from post would lose money driving in to post to utilize the facilities. Leadership is challenged as well, 80 miles is a long way to drive to check on your Soldier and his or her family. Ensuring our Soldiers and his or her family are living in appropriate conditions is a very important responsibility for all leaders. If the leader has to drive 160 miles round trip to check on his Soldier, most likely that Soldier will not be

checked on as much as the Soldier that lives five to ten miles from his leader. For a team leader to be expected to check on his or her Soldiers that live 80 miles from post is not right. That is a lot of time spent and a lot of money for gas spent. Young leaders want to do the right thing. Young leaders want to check on their Soldiers and ensure they have adequate housing and that their families are taken care of. Leaders are faced with a great challenge when they have to drive over two hours to do their jobs.

The Ethical Dilemma at the 10th Mountain Division is Housing on post is given to commissioned officers and senior NCOs. Soldiers are left to get the bottom of the housing list. Young SPC's and below are the Soldiers who need to use the facilities on post more than anyone. Often young Soldiers are recently married and do not even have transportation upon arrival to their duty station. Young Soldiers living far from post have a financial burden, and this causes relationship problems in the marriage. Young Soldiers have a tough enough time adapting to their new life style in the military with out the added problems of living so far from the installation and their leadership. Many young Soldiers have pregnant wives that are forced to drive 80 miles for countless appointments before and after birth. Once again this is money coming out of younger Soldiers pockets. Soldiers living off post often use off post facilities for groceries and convenient stores for last minute needed items. Soldiers spend extra money on taxes and larger prices for goods because they are unable to use the AAFES facilities do to the distance they are forced to live from the installation. First term Soldiers are seeing things that I did not have to go through as far as the housing problem. First impressions are lasting impressions and a lot of young Soldiers that are married are getting the wrong impression of the Army because of the housing problem. Soldiers have parents and other family members come to Fort Drum to visit and once those parents see that their children are forced to live that far from

the installation, they are concerned. As leaders we are responsible for the welfare of young American women and men. I am embarrassed that we can not do any better for these young great Americans that volunteered to serve their country. Fort Drum and the Army leadership need to fix this problem as soon as possible. I know that the leadership at Drum is working very hard to fix this short coming. To fix the housing issue will take money and time.

These are two COA's that could resolve the housing problem at Fort Drum. COA one, Fort Drum could take better care of their young soldiers and their spouses by ensuring they have the priority for on post housing, after essential personal are housed. Understandably key leaders must have on post housing do to their demanding jobs and long work hours. Once the key leaders have housing then the leaders should ensure that our junior Soldiers are taken care of. A SFC or MSG that is working in one of the S or G shops that does not wear a leadership tab should be living further away from post than the SPC and bellow. The SFC and higher can afford to miss out on the AAFES facilities. Senior NCOs and junior officers have for the most part two automobiles and can afford to get their family to the installation if needed. Young Soldiers would be more likely to reenlist for another tour in the Army if they had housing on post for their first duty station. This would help Fort Drum, the Army and, the Soldier as well as the dependents. On post housing would help with financial burden by allowing the Soldier and his family to enjoy their benefits and enjoy the time they serve at Fort Drum. Course of Action Two, is to build more housing on Fort Drum proper. Fort Drum has plenty of unused wood line and training areas that could be cleared for housing areas. More Housing on post would keep all Soldiers happy. All Soldiers should live close to post so they can enjoy all their military benefits. This COA would of course take longer and will cost a large amount of money. The bottom line is that with the war on terrorism we need all the Soldiers we can get. If we provide

Griffith 4

adequate housing and look out for their welfare and give them the leadership they deserve we will keep quality Soldiers in the Army.