

LDERSHIP IN SIGHT

NCOs past and present share their perspectives on the Army Values

NCOs: Standard-bearers for LOYALTY

Loyalty, according to our Army Values, means bearing true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your unit and other Soldiers. It means you believe and are devoted to something bigger than yourself. It means you will be loyal to those with whom you serve, seniors, peers and subordinates alike.

The NCO Guide says loyalty means standing by your Soldiers' honest mistakes and taking pride in their accomplishments. It means executing a commander's decision without "talking down" about it with peers or subordinates.

These definitions are easy to understand. Most of us have no issues being loyal to those with whom we serve when we are all geared toward the same goal. The definition gets a little hazy, though, when you're faced with a moral dilemma — pinning your loyalty to the unit against your loyalty to the Army, or the loyalty of your subordinates against the loyalty of those you serve.

As seen in recent history, Soldiers can be negatively influenced by ethically bankrupt NCOs, thus directly influencing troops to compromise their values and ethics on the battlefield. Soldiers in this scenario sometimes make a conscious decision to follow their leader, knowing full well the NCO is not living the Army Values, not following our professional military ethic and certainly not in keeping with our oath of enlistment and code of conduct.

— What would make Soldiers follow a morally and ethically bankrupt NCO and forgo the loyalty to the Army's mission? The short answer is that Soldiers sometimes have to choose between loyalty to a leader and loyalty to the nation and Constitution. But as professional NCOs, why are we forcing our Soldiers to make this choice? When you fail to follow an Army Value, you are forcing your Soldiers to compromise their values. It is imperative that we, as senior leaders, live all the Army Values and be the ethical standard-bearer our Soldiers need and deserve.

Get involved with your Soldiers and talk about these values. Pull your Soldiers aside, during monthly counseling or in a public forum such as Sergeants Time, and have a frank discussion about loyalty. Talk about proper actions when loyalty is tested. Talk about being loyal to the team and the Army's mission. Only with this dialogue can we truly understand what it means to be loyal and be a professional Soldier.

Chandler is the 14th sergeant major of the Army.

**Sgt. Maj. of the Army
Raymond F. Chandler III**

October 2011



Sgt. Jaclyn Guzman, a member of the U.S. Forces Afghanistan Protective Service Detail, maintains visual surveillance Sept. 13 as shots are fired and explosions erupt from a building in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Photo by Sgt. Catherine Threat

Facing up to **DUTY**'s dilemma

FM 100-1, *The Profession of Arms*, barely touches the diverse ethical dilemmas our leaders face today when using the word “duty” to describe the Warrior Ethos.

The field manual is on track when it says that the values of integrity and selfless service are part of the concept of duty. However, looking beyond the oversimplifications and glittering generalities of the manual, we see a path of professional ethical behavior strewn with boulders and pitfalls.

The language of today’s Army leadership gives us a hint of what to expect. We have all heard the catchphrases: “Do more with less.” “Build down.” “Smaller but better.” The incongruity of these phrases points out the avalanche of ethical dilemmas facing our leadership today.

The “do more with less” mentality grew out of the post-Cold War, bottom-up review. This can-do attitude during a time of drastic force reduction is a serious challenge to leadership ethics.

This is particularly true when military leaders fail to point out to higher-ups that their resources aren’t sufficient to support the higher-ups’ expectations.

This phenomenon can occur at every level of command.

For example, the situation may start when a commander is pressured to show a level of unit readiness that can’t possibly be maintained under current budget restraints. Without the money to fix broken radios, to buy fuel for tanks and trucks, or to transport Soldiers and equipment, the unit cannot keep its fighting edge.

How hard is it for that commander to tell his boss that the unit isn’t fit to fight? With today’s “smaller but better” Army fostering a “zero-defect” mentality, such an admission could mean a “two-block” on the commander’s Officer Evaluation Report — an admission resulting in professional suicide.

Ultimately, this ethical dilemma offers the commander two choices: He can act according to the value of integrity by telling his boss the truth about his unit’s readiness (and suffer the consequences), or he can be an example of selfless service by dedicating more time to the job and pressing his unit in an attempt to achieve the impossible. This is not a question of the commander’s motive; he may very well believe he is doing the honorable thing. However, only the former choice is truly one of both integrity and selfless service.

Seen from another perspective, leading the “smaller but better” Army means taking a new approach to show-

ing off the installation. A former sergeant major of the Army once told an audience about the time a senator called him regarding a recent congressional visit to a large Army post. The veteran senator suggested that the next time the Army gave a congressional delegation a base tour, military leaders shouldn’t just show the best facilities. It seems that the past commander, in his pride for his installation, had done just that. The resulting impression was that the Army was in no need of money for improvement or infrastructure repair.

The struggle here is again one of integrity versus selfless service. I can’t remember ever showing a visiting dignitary the worst area of our organization. Traditionally, we’ve always put our best foot forward and showed off our most modern facility. It’s part of the inspection process ingrained in the military. However, a fresh look at the situation shows how the post commander in the last example might revise his ethical decision-making process to more honestly reflect today’s force situation.

Probably the most significant and emotionally charged ethical issue facing our leaders is their ability to remain credible as proponents of the common Soldier and his or her family. Once again, it’s not a question of motive, but one of reality versus rhetoric.

Army leaders have taken us through a drastic reduction in force. Now, believing we are close to the end-state number and expecting some stabilization, we are being told to prepare for additional cuts. As a result, Soldiers are wondering about their future in the Army. Furthermore, as funds for quality of life issues dry up, troops ask themselves what benefit or family program is next on the chopping block.

Ultimately, this ethical question of integrity versus self-sacrifice extends to all of us in the military. Do we ask to be treated as we were promised when we joined the military (remember the old motto, “The Army takes care of its own”?), or do we stoically accept that we are inevitably to become a “smaller but better” Army “doing more with less”? It’s not an easy question to answer, but one with which we will continue to struggle for years to come.

Fuller was a student in the first nine-month Sergeants Major Course at the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy, Fort Bliss, Texas.

Sgt. Maj. Tommy Z. Fuller

Spring 2006



A Soldier from 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, unloads his Stryker armored fighting vehicle Aug. 12 after a day of fire missions at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif.

Photo by Spc. Ryan Hallock

RESPECT: A value in any branch of service

Respect — it is a core value all branches of service share and place great emphasis on. Your attitudes about the worth of people, concepts and other things describe your values. Everything begins there. We will focus on people, who without a doubt, are our greatest resource. My question to you is what must you do and have in order to influence the values of your troops? You must respect your troops and have their respect, which brings up another important question that has been around for ages — is respect earned or demanded?

When dealing with people and relationships, one should be mindful that respect is earned. In professional or authoritarian positions, (military) respect is demanded, but may not be fully given if not also earned. Passive or aggressive behavior could be evidence of full respect not given to someone who just demands respect. Rank does have its privileges, but when abused, you can rest assured you will not gain the respect of your troops.

If you choose to depend on your rank to gain the respect of those you lead and work with, you will be fighting a losing battle throughout your career.

At the end of the day, we all take off the uniform. At least I hope we do. This is who we really are. Social learning and life's experiences contribute to what we believe to be important. Our parents and upbringing also contribute significantly to how we relate to other people. Those of us with long military careers have also been influenced by our former leaders. Nothing is more encouraging than a young officer acknowledging the

importance of being mentored by a respectful, professional, seasoned, enlisted service member.

One common theme among all of the core values of the different branches, in reference to respect, is we are to give it. Not one mentions that we demand respect. The Air Force says, "Respect for others." "Service before self" tells us also that a good leader places the troops ahead of his or her personal comfort. We must always act in the certain knowledge that all people possess a fundamental worth as human beings. The Army says, "Treat people as they should be treated." The Coast Guard: "We value our diverse work force. We treat each other with fairness, dignity, and compassion."

The Marine Corps says, "In the Marines, honesty, honor, and respect for oneself and others" are built into the very foundation. The Navy says, "Show respect toward all people without regard to race, religion, or gender; treat each individual with human dignity."

I would like to leave you with one last thought to ponder: Approach determines response. How you approach a person will determine how they respond to you!

Diaz served as the sergeant major of the 305th Press Camp Headquarters at Joint Task Force Guantanamo, Cuba.

Sgt. Maj. Oscar Diaz

December 2006

SELFLESS SERVICE makes us stronger

From my experiences and during my career in the Army, I feel one leadership trait stands out above the rest — selfless service. Selfless service is a trait that all leaders must possess. The necessity for it in today’s Army is critical. I believe selfless service guides and pushes a noncommissioned officer to the next level, thus causing a leader to place the needs of Soldiers above his or her own.

Sgt. David Ruiz

Winter 2001

The Army preaches selflessness as a desired quality of a Soldier. It’s having a strong desire to thrive — not self-centered, but selfless.

Selfless ambition is a positive attitude that uses an individual’s talent to benefit others. For this NCO, that is a very important issue.

This quality transcends and progresses from the individual Soldier all the way up the NCO support channel, from a four-man fire team through the squad, platoon and company levels, and in turn to a division, corps and our Army.

By not being ego-centered, our Army becomes stronger as a whole when our future leaders experience, understand and live this element of leadership responsibility.

As a leader and Soldier, I realize that NCOs are the backbone and the foundation that will mentor our Army’s future leaders.

Soldiers are the most important assets of today’s Army. Without outstanding Soldiers, the Army will not meet the expectations that our world requires for the 21st century.

As leaders, we must display positive attitude, set the example, uphold the NCO Creed and live up to our Corps’ values.

By understanding and applying selfless service into our way of life, our Army will be more professional, efficient and effective, thereby able to carry out the missions our nation entrusts to us.

Ruiz was assigned to the Combat Support Coordination Team 2 in Taegu, Korea.



Honor is as **HONOR** does

It was dark that winter evening as I drove down Fenwick Road at Fort Monroe, Va. Suddenly, the vehicle in front of me stopped by the curb, letting out a Marine. Even in the dark, he was easily recognizable in his dress blues, including the white belt and white cap.

As he approached the front step of what I presumed was his residence, he raised his right arm and rendered a crisp hand salute. I looked to see if there was someone else there. He was alone, except for the colors of the United States of America proudly waving on the porch.

It struck me how many uniformed personnel duck indoors to avoid the sounding of “Retreat,” or the ones that drive through it, pretending not to hear the distinct bugle call. If a thing is expedient — and usually that means someone may be watching — then we do it. On the night mentioned, it was dark, the Marine’s ride had pulled away and no one would have been the wiser if he had decided he was “off-duty.”

Honor is as honor does. His act, simple and automatic, spoke volumes about his character and took my mind to larger ramifications of the words “character” and “honor.”

A few months ago, I heard Chaplain (Lt. Col.) David Reese, the Fort Monroe post chaplain, quote D.L. Moody as saying, “Character is what you are in the dark.” It’s what you do when no one sees you and when there is little chance of being discovered. The nature of those secret deeds is something that defines our character. A person’s visible life eventually manifests those priorities, which resonate in the silent chambers of one’s soul. Free are those who have successfully calibrated their acts and deeds with their values, a daunting task to say the least, but one worthy of our best efforts.

These pillars of principle — character and honor — have become cliché military catchphrases. But I feel that their relevance endures because of the enormous impact they have in the course of events. I saw them personified in deed on March 23, 1994. Unlike the Marine whose act of honor was cloaked under the veil of darkness, these were manifest in the bright daylight of a beautiful North Carolina spring afternoon.

As a jumpmaster student at Pope Air Force Base’s “Green Ramp,” I remember hearing what sounded like a fighter jet’s afterburner igniting. In actuality, an Air Force F-16 fighter and a C-130 cargo plane had

“bumped” mid-air. The pilots ejected, sending the F-16, now a massive fireball after ricocheting off of a parked plane — careening through scores of paratroopers massed for an airborne operation.

The scene was surreal. Victims, crushed and burned, lay scattered across the tarmac amid burning vehicles. The booms of secondary explosions muffled all other noises. The first to respond were mostly fellow students at the Jumpmaster School, some of whom were trained combat lifesavers. But the training they received never prepared them for the medical emergencies they now faced.

We did what we could; just as Maj. Larry Perino and his fellow Rangers had done with downed Blackhawks nearly six months prior in Mogadishu, Somalia.

I watched a Soldier extinguish flames on a burning Soldier with nothing but his bare hands. I saw another frantically attempting CPR to save a convulsing Soldier. A senior jumpmaster instructor, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Bennett, cleared out a classroom to set up a burn and triage site. Staff Sgt. Daniel Price epitomized the Warrior Ethos when he threw himself over Spc. Estella Wingfield, shielding her from the blast. She survived, but Price, a husband and father of five, gave his life for the principles that propelled him.

Without regard for personal safety, Soldiers responded to the warrior code that had been instilled in them since their reception into the Army. These patriots reacted to the crisis, just as we all witnessed firefighters, police and ordinary citizens doing on Sept. 11, 2001. Herein was the relevance of words that flow so freely from our lips — words like character, honor, moral courage and selfless service.

Twenty-four paratroopers perished as a result of that incident March 23, 1994; 100 more were injured. However, the core values of our Army and nation, born of small and seemingly insignificant acts of character and honor, emerged “refreshed by the blood of martyrs” and heroes.

Coe was the NCOIC of the Fort Monroe post chaplain’s office.

Staff Sgt. Glenn Coe

April 2003

Sgt. Sterling Shearer, a team leader attached to the Laghman Provincial Reconstruction Team, walks and talks with an Afghan boy Sept. 12 in the Alisheng district of Laghman province. The PRT, partnered with the security forces assistant team and the Afghan National Police, patrolled through a village to talk to the locals and teach the ANP proper procedures during patrols.

U.S. Air Force photo by Sgt. Ryan Crane



Soldiers assigned to B Troop, 1st Squadron, 38th Cavalry Regiment, 525th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, brace against flying dirt and debris June 6 following the departure of a UH-60 helicopter at the Weesh border crossing point, Afghanistan.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jessica Lockoska

Leadership starts with **INTEGRITY**

Sgt. Juan Carreon believes living by the Army's values and maintaining personal integrity are two hallmarks of a good noncommissioned officer.

"As an NCO, one of the things I will not give up are my personal values," said Carreon, a human resources specialist with V Corps' Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

Sgt. Juan Carreon

as told to Dave Melancon
March 2009

"We all have family values, but each individual has personal values that we have to stand by and stick by," he said.

During the V Corps Special Troops Battalion NCO induction ceremony at U.S. Army Garrison Heidelberg, Germany, on Feb. 27, 2009, Carreon said his primary goal as an NCO is to mentor other Soldiers. Caring is the first step in that process, he said.

"I mentor Soldiers by showing them I care," he explained. "I show them everything I have learned and encourage them to come to me for anything. I always ask how they are doing."

Those conversations can take place on the personal and professional level, he said.

Carreon said HHC V Corps' first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Renee Baldwin, is his mentor and the example he fol-

lows in establishing his own leadership style as an NCO.

"She carries herself with the utmost professionalism," he said. "She cares about Soldiers and their families. She has helped me become an NCO by motivating me and being a mentor."

For her part, Baldwin called Carreon a true professional.

"He is mature and you can see that in his customer service skills," the first sergeant said. "He treats everybody with dignity and respect."

The HHC orderly room staff is constantly busy helping Soldiers take care of personnel matters, and Carreon gives those Soldiers service that is above and beyond, she added.

"He treats every action like the Soldier is standing in front of him," Baldwin said. "He follows up on every action, making sure it is complete."

Carreon has set a high mark for his ultimate career goal. He says he hopes to earn the Army's top enlisted rank — command sergeant major — while continuing to be "a mentor that has a positive effect on peoples' lives."

However, the foundation of any NCO's career is the Army's values, he said.

"We have integrity," he added. "There's courage and always doing the right thing (even) when no one is around."

Faith, **PERSONAL COURAGE** led to escape

As a 25-year-old sergeant first class, Isaac Camacho escaped from a Vietnamese prisoner of war camp where he had been held for 22 months, from 1963 to 1965.

“When you’re a POW, you always think to escape, then take the opportunity when it comes. In the meantime, I counted the bars on my cage or drew pictures in the dirt. I sang, weaved bamboo or worked math problems.

“We always had this threat of being killed, especially when one of theirs was killed. So when we (POWs) were together on details, I’d tell the guys, ‘Don’t forget to pray. We may be here in nowhere land, but someone up there will help us.’ I always believed that and knew my chance to escape would come.

“I told this Marine captain about my plans to escape. He wrote me a prayer in real small print and slipped it to me. I prayed that prayer every day. I also knew that once I escaped — if I got caught — it would be my end. So I asked the Lord daily, ‘If you help me escape I’ll be the best Catholic ever.’

“Well my time came. I’d been lubricating a peg in my cage with soap and water I’d stolen while on details. They’d taken my chains away and put them on two captains who’d just been brought to camp. I felt sorry for them, but this was my opportunity. I knew there was little chance for a rescue attempt because we were in the jungle near the Cambodian border, some 75 to 80 miles northeast of Saigon. It was called the Parrot’s Beak area.

“The night I escaped, it was thundering, lightning and raining. I used the trail into the jungle that we used when we were taken to cut wood for the POW mess hall; they’d put a white log for us to sit on there. I slipped into the jungle off that trail and was gone about an hour when I came right back to that same log. I was devastated. I sat thinking, ‘Lord, help me now.’ After a few minutes, I’m thinking, ‘You big dummy, the water — SF (Special Forces) training. The water will lead you to a creek, a creek to a river.’ So I followed the water and, shortly thereafter, I was diving into the river.

“By the time daylight came, I was about three miles away from the camp. I paddled down river all that time and was tired. I reached up, grabbed a branch and rested for a while. I knew the current was going south, so I skirted it until the sun came up. Then I took a bearing of southeast through the jungle for the rest of my first day.

“On the second day, I saw the sky for the first time through an open area in the jungle. I was hoping to see a plane so I could signal with a piece of mirror I’d brought along. But it seemed I always heard the planes when I was in the thick of the jungle.

“I thought I was about to buy the farm on day three. I’d been without food and water all this time. It was cloudy and, when the sun came out, I reoriented myself and realized I was going in the wrong direction. Exhausted, no food or water, and now I’m going the wrong way. But I didn’t quit. I went back into the jungle for cover and to look for food.

“Later I saw an L20 observation aircraft with US Army letters. I darted out to see his direction. It led me to a highway. This was the first man-made object I’d seen in a long while. It boosted my morale 100 percent. I started running as fast as I could. It really brought me back to life. I skirted this highway until I came to a rubber plantation. I checked it out and saw bunkers and a Vietnamese flag. How was I going to get into this camp without getting shot? Then I saw a Red Cross vehicle. I stopped the driver and spoke with him. He spoke only French. Suddenly, I find I’m speaking French with him. (Camacho had learned some of the language during French survival training).

“I had this club I’d made and I’m thinking, ‘If he tries anything it’s going to be him, not me.’ When you’re trying to survive, you must think that way. Anyway, at this point I didn’t feel weak anymore. When we drove into the gate, the guards locked and loaded their weapons. They took me to the village chief, who spoke English. The guy kept saying, ‘You don’t look like an American,’ so I had to tell him about my captivity and escape. Then this Special Forces medic pulls up, looks at me, and says, ‘Ike, is that you?’

“They took me for first aid, food, a shower and my uniform. At the hospital, I asked to see a priest. I wanted to thank God for giving me courage, direction and strength to get back to U.S. hands.

“I now know that I’d have never survived or escaped if I hadn’t kept myself physically fit, mentally alert and spiritually focused — even while in captivity. Resisting threats and sometimes beating the enemy at their own game boosted my morale and spirit. The smallest victory gave me new life.

“The war was never over for me, even while I was in my cage. I was determined to always fight back. I was only able to do that by exercising those principles.”

Camacho retired from the active Army in 1975 as a sergeant major, and from the Army Reserve as a captain 10 years later.

Sgt. Maj. Isaac Camacho

as told to Sgt. Maj. Brenda L. Hester
Summer 1993