

between war and crime, using this gap to their advantage. They weave criminal and military action into one coherent whole. Our law enforcement, military and intelligence agencies—and those of our allies—have done yeoman's work trying to stitch this gap, balancing the protection of their nation's citizens with individual civil rights, but the gap remains.

If we were fighting a war, the stitching would be less ad hoc both internally to our nation and externally among the set of nations that face a common threat. We would have formed a real coalition or alliance, one in which the members of the alliance have a voice in the creation and execution of a long-term strategy, not one in which members are treated as if they were a posse going after bad guys with a U.S. sheriff. In addition, we would have sought to establish the kind of robust conventions, authorities and coordinative bodies that would facilitate coherent transnational action among allies. We would have conducted a counternarrative campaign aimed to erode the attractiveness of the insurgents' motivational ideology. Finally, we would have educated the American people beyond bumper-sticker slogans.

Over the past 15 years, all of us have seen the common threat grow—not just

in size, but also in modus operandi. How many more Paris-style attacks are necessary to convince us that we are at war and our mutual enemies are more than just criminals, even if they are not conventional soldiers? While the insurgency we face is not an existential threat to the U.S. in one sense, who can argue that their actions have not already altered the way we live at home and especially abroad? Who doubts that if they create the world they envision, it would be counter to the security and economic interests of the U.S. and our allies?

We have gotten better at killing those whom we identify as an enemy and uncovering some plots before they are hatched, but we have not yet reached "good enough"—not for ourselves as individual nations or as a set of sovereign bodies. Until we heed Clausewitz' advice to fully adapt to the form of war that has been thrust upon us, we will continue to be our own impediment to effectively countering our enemies, thus allowing them to expand their influence and grow even stronger. □

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tion and logistics as well as staff coordination, the S-3 and battalion commander ran the batteries through standardized mission sets.

Once the tactical training operations were successfully completed, the unit prepared to head back to garrison. That preparation entailed intense equipment accountability, maintenance and cleaning for the rail movement of the tracked vehicles and ground convoy of the assorted wheeled vehicles. The S-3 had done his job; now, it was time for me to get the unit back home safely and in good order.

The battle-ready battalion headquarters had certified its units and their leaders as tactically competent in accordance with the mission-essential task lists. We understandably felt a sense of accomplishment. Then "it" happened in the Hohenfels cantonment area the afternoon before we were to deploy. One of the battery commanders approached to tell me that his lieutenant was missing from the motor pool where he should have been with his soldiers, supervising their preparations. The battery commander was concerned and rightfully so.

Since the officer was part of a band of four lieutenants who hung out together back in garrison, I summoned the other battery commanders and directed that they bring their also-missing lieutenants to me once they showed up. Each battery commander eventually reported to me with his drunken lieutenant. To celebrate their training "battlefield" accomplishments, the band of four had violated the general order that prohibited alcohol consumption by training units. More importantly, they had violated the trust and confidence placed in them as officers and leaders. While the lieutenants had demonstrated tactical competence for core missions, their character was lacking.

Before one dismisses this as just the bad behavior of four individuals, it is important to acknowledge that something larger and more insidious was in play—the command climate of the battalion. In hindsight, there were indicators back at home station during my first month as the XO, such as comments by the battalion commander about the "f***ing bureaucrats," his disdain for the rules that got in the way of soldiering and accomplishing missions, and the recurring

Hard Rights Trump Easy Wrongs

By Col. Charles D. Allen, U.S. Army retired

As a retired member of the U.S. military profession, I am troubled by the news and media reports of bad behavior within the profession of arms. Some observers may say this is nothing new, and I must agree. Throughout my career experience, there were incidents of leader misconduct by officers, NCOs and civilians alike. Some incidents received more visibility than others. Now, however, the reports are of senior personnel whom I have respected, served with or taught. This naturally leads to two questions: "What is going on?" and "Why?" In considering these questions, I am drawn to a two-decade-old experience.

After completing my nearly two-year

stint as a V Corps planner, in the summer of 1993 I got the opportunity to be the executive officer of a field artillery battalion. This was my branch-qualifying assignment as a major. I was eager to get back to an operational unit and team up with a classmate who was the operations officer (S-3). The major training event for that summer was the conduct of a battery-level Army Training and Evaluation Program at the Combat Maneuver Training Center in Hohenfels, Germany, before the battalion-level certification that fall. This was a big deal with the anticipated deployments to Bosnia (unknown to us, still two years away). While I focused on administra-

Monday morning talk of the goings-on from the Friday officer's beer call, among other things. Maybe as the XO, I had been too focused during those early days in the unit on keeping down the deadline report, working the metrics and reports for the monthly division logistics readiness review, and managing personnel actions. Such is the leader's focus during garrison operations. Maybe I was discounting these behaviors as "just life in an operational unit."

In any case, when the battery commander approached me in Hohenfels expressing his concern about the missing lieutenant, it was a clear signal that he needed me to be a steward of our profession and to not perpetuate the existing climate of the battalion. This was my test. I had the option of gathering the offending officers and handling the situation myself with some hard-nosed counseling. "What happens in the field stays in the field" would have been a convenient mantra. I chose otherwise and informed the chain of command of the officers' misconduct.

Back at home station, the lieutenants faced Uniform Code of Military Justice proceedings and were subsequently reassigned out of the unit. Over the next months, the behavior of the battalion commander did not change, but the climate of the unit did. The field-grade and battery officers reclaimed our professional obligations, and we found ways to do what we knew was right. It was perhaps not our individual moral courage that drove the change but our collective responsibility to do the right thing for the soldiers and our mission.

At present, the "what" and "why" questions persist as I read the reports of investigations and courts-martial pro-

ceedings on officer misconduct. The root cause invariably is attributed to individual failings: the senior leader's lack of character and the lack of moral courage of those around the leader to challenge the bad behavior or at least question visible indicators.

One of the popular responses in the U.S. military is to conduct ethical training and require reading "The Bathsheba Syndrome: The Ethical Failure of Successful Leaders" by Dean C. Ludwig and Clinton O. Longenecker. Coincidentally, this article was published in 1993—the same year as the Hohenfels incident. Its intent is to explore why otherwise successful people make career-ending ethical mistakes. The authors contend that ethical failures are preceded by the "by-products of success—loss of strategic focus, privileged access, control of resources, and inflated belief in ability to manipulate outcomes." Our military leaders are equally subject to these conditions, which result from personal and professional successes in their careers and can lead to hubris as well as a sense of entitlement. Clearly, they face many temptations.

Of the authors' seven lessons, I find two most salient from my Hohenfels experience and, I contend, for our current senior leaders:

- "It is difficult if not impossible to partake in unethical behavior without implicating and/or involving others in the organization."

- "Not getting caught initially can produce self-delusion and increase the likelihood of future unethical behavior."

While an individual may choose to engage in unethical behavior once, it lowers the barriers to the next bad choice. Such

behaviors may be supported by acts of commission (by others who join in) and omission (in which others fail to take personal responsibility to address ethical violations). Conversely, it is my opinion that once we choose the harder right over the easier wrong, the next choice becomes a bit easier as we build confidence in our ability to be virtuous.

Likewise, unit members also know what is right and are looking for support among their peers and leaders to act accordingly. At the group and unit levels, the organizational climate is the collection of common practices and expectations—very much the lived experiences of people.

From that summer of 1993, the lessons were simple: Values are tested continuously, and when you act in accordance with values, leaders set the climate that allows others in the unit to do what they know is right. While we may have different expectations of leaders based upon their experience levels, we should have the same values regardless of rank or position. How will you prepare yourself and others around you for the inevitable tests of character? □

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