

Corps Morale: End Hypocrisy and Lead with Actions

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Cadet Guest Writer

We all know that Corps morale has been pitiful this year, but there is a reason for it. It is one that too many people are afraid to say out loud for fear of what may happen to them. I'm talking about some of our "Corps Leaders." Take for an example Col. Hutchings. He began dismissing cadets left and right this fall for over a statement made by an upperclassman to a Rat, along with various similar complaints. Yet nothing happened to him last year concerning the Rat on the Gim whom he yelled at and then pushed into a wall in a fit of rage. He lost no work days, no pay. He did not even have to apologize. This seems to me to be a gross abuse of one's authority. How can he be so strict on cadets for their words, yet take no responsibility for his own actions?

Life is not a one way street, and regardless of a

person's age, rank, etc., we are all expected to uphold honesty, justice, and intelligence. When cadets see their friends being sent home left and right, and a Superintendent who belittles them during a parade in which they had no chance to defend themselves against accusations, how in God's name can you expect them to take pride in where they are? I was told that while the Superintendent was outside with the audience that had gathered for parade, and while the Corps was inside Barracks, he apologized on behalf of VMI and said that he could not understand the Corps' lack of respect for those who lost their lives on September 11. If that is true, it will be a cold day before I ever speak to him again, for it is absolutely disgusting to use the souls of so many innocent dead as a weapon to attack the Corps' image in something that amounted to nothing more than a political pissing match between the Corps and the

administration.

I have lost my sense of morale here because I have seen with my own eyes that the majority of the administration no longer has any concern for the welfare of the Corps. To them it is only about money, enrollment statistics, and keeping a good outside image of VMI presented to the public, regardless of the fact that the VMI system is rotting from the inside out. I'm not perfect, but I try to help everyone I can,

and I enjoy saying hello to other cadets and being cordial and polite. But I continuously see Tac officers who delight in such things as boning Second Classmen senseless during their Ring Figure weekend, as well as boning their own guard team into the next millennium. They like to see how many rooms they can inspect in a day, and take personal delight in taking away a cadet's pride as well as his privileges, seeing it as just another part of their job. This

is 99.9% of the problem with VMI right now. It's people who are more worried about what complete strangers think about VMI than what the young men and women who go to school here think. And while there are many administrators who do not fit this bill, I can see their patience and faith that things will get better slowly dwindling day by day. If there is one thing I think VMI needs, it is men who lead by deeds and not words alone.