

Alumni,

The situation at the Citadel is desperate and needs your voice. The Alumni are the only ones with the power which is a direct result of your generous donations. You, as Alumni are the only hope of rectifying our once proud institution. A call for swift and immediate change in leadership must occur. We beg you to act and act swiftly.

#### Current State of the Corps of Cadets

I recently had the opportunity to join my classmate in talking to a number of upper-class cadets about various issues at the Citadel. We talked about the recently controversial knob video, the general state of the Fourth Class System, and other issues. The conversation lasted over an hour and was, to be frank, quite shocking.

#### Female knob video

Since the now infamous video of the female knob talking back to an upperclassman was posted there has been lots of discussion on Facebook. I don't want to beat a dead horse but I do want to address something significant. Two of the most common concerns that were raised were "We don't know the context" and "They should have just pulled her for demerits/punishments." These are reasonable concerns. The cadets told us that this knob is well known for her poor conduct and appearance and her disrespectful attitude towards upperclassmen. The confrontation that was filmed was by far not the first that has taken place. She has received on-the-spot corrections from numerous upperclassmen in the past and has disregarded them with the same attitude. When they resorted to pulling her the white slips were thrown out (more on that later). She has been exempted from any demerits/punishments. This lack of discipline is what led to the confrontation being filmed, out of exasperation and a desire to make it known to alumni what is occurring. You can all form your own judgments based on this information.

Current state of discipline in the Corps The general attitude across the Corps towards Captain Paluso is one of deep disappointment and mistrust. There has been a visible change in the Fourth Class system and in discipline towards the upper classes since he has taken the role of Commandant. Initially the upper classes were excited for Paluso. He sold himself to the Corps as a hardliner who would enforce the Blue Book as written and not add nor modify it in any way. Within weeks the Corps began receiving multiple e-mails detailing new additions to the Blue Book, almost all of them regarding modifications to the Fourth Class system.

Here's a rundown of what concerns the Corps:

- Hell Week is completely neutered. There is no yelling, very little PT, and all training is done under direct supervision of Tac officers. The cadre feels that instead of taking responsibility and being leaders they are simply acting as assistants to Jenkins Hall. Instead of cadre being something prestigious and desirable upperclassmen are now actively avoiding it due to the liability it carries. Knobs often use video or audio recording every time an upperclassman is in their room, creating mistrust and resentment on both sides.

- If more than two knobs in a company quit by Parent's Weekend the company CO and XO are at risk of losing their rank and receiving a Battalion Transfer. This has led to commanders begging knobs not to quit and making any concession to them to keep them in school.

- All battalion transfers, for any reason, are now permanent. Cadets who receive them are becoming cynical and desperate because they have no hope of returning to their home company

- Upperclassmen are fearful of inspecting knobs and so they are leaving it to the CO and First Sergeant, who usually don't have time to inspect every knob every day leading to poor personal appearance since there is no accountability

- Knobs are taught that any yelling, any PT, and any unofficial contact is hazing. Knob duties such as sweep details are now treated as hazing and result in 80 tours/battalion transfer.

- Any pull against a knob is treated as a "grudge pull" and thrown out. Knobs receive no demerits and no punishments. As the year has gone on the knobs have become aware of this and are becoming increasingly unruly. They talk back, conduct themselves without discipline or composure, and generally disregard the system.

- All contact with knobs ceases at 7:50 PM. Knobs are now allowed to go to bed at 9:00 PM.

- There is a new Blue Book violation for social media offenses. Cadets are given punishments up to 80 tours and a permanent battalion transfer, and sometimes threatened with expulsion, for something as simple as "liking" a Facebook post made by an alumnus.

- Upperclassmen view Captain Paluso as a bully. He spends lots of time personally patrolling campus and pulling upperclassmen for any infraction. When upper class cadets report to his office they are given the option of performing PT in his office in exchange for not receiving maximum punishments. This sets a contradictory example of leadership since cadets are not allowed to lead knobs in the same fashion.

As I said, this is all very shocking. The cadets we spoke to were very passionate about their love for the school and their appreciation for the knob system. They want be professional and conduct the system in an appropriate way but the new hyper-sensitivity of Jenkins Hall and obsessiveness with retention creates too much of a liability. If anybody thinks these are all positive changes and are the ideal state of the Corps of Cadets then carry on. But I think this is a dire situation and that the Citadel is heading in the wrong direction overall.

Again, please take action or the fourth class system our institution was founded on is no more.