

This letter is written out of concern for the reputation of The Citadel and the city that it represents. The story regarding the so called "Hazing" violations reported in the newspaper recently has been exaggerated in the vast majority of the charges i.e. white slips. The charges resulting in cadets "assumed" to have been expelled may very well be from trumped up & blown out of proportion charges. Interesting that there were triple digit charges or white slips. That should tell you something.

While change is always difficult, change should be navigated in a positive manner while maintaining the reputation of the entity. The Citadel is an icon and integral part of the economic well being of Charleston in tourism and providing jobs. The history is rich and proud for this institution. This institution has had high academic standards, values, morals and taught leadership as well as prepared men and women to serve our country.

Here is the "rest of the story":

The new leadership directed by the new Commandant is not promoting honesty and integrity. Cadets are not learning and teaching leadership, but learning a Hitler mentality. The morale is an all time low. There is no chain of command. All leadership has been removed from upperclassmen. Upper class cadets are miserable and many are seeking ways out, either by transfer or study abroad. While the knob retention may be higher, revenues will be lost by upperclassmen leaving.

Cadets are attempting to follow the rules, but the rules are constantly changing and punishments don't fit the offense. Example: Near expulsion for an upperclassman that ended up in a Battalion Transfer with extreme tours from a knob lying. The knob tried to "process out" (leave) multiple times as it was clear he did not want to be at the Citadel. The so called offense came to the board. There were >5 upperclassmen testimonies to the occurrence. The knobs roommate was found to be lying and admitted he was not even present for the so called offense. BT & tours were still in effect for the falsely accused cadet. Incidents like these are rampant among the Corp. What is this teaching-truth and honesty is punished and lying is acceptable?

The Citadel has become a prison. Upperclassmen are afraid to even look at a knob for fear of punishment. How are these cadets supposed to learn and teach leadership? Upperclassmen are so fearful they cannot focus on academics. Academics have made the Citadel a desirable college in the past. The academic focus is eroding. There is so much focus on "catching" someone breaking the ever changing rules that grades are slipping.

There are serious health and well being issues. The food is deplorable. Raw chicken has been served numerous times over the past two semesters. Maybe the Commandant should focus on the food service rather than "hiding in the bushes" trying to catch cadets breaking rules. DHEC violations don't look good for recruiting students. Rats have infested 5th Battalion and of course it is the cadets' fault. Doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out those hungry cadets from disgusting mess hall food equals food in barracks. Don't blame them one bit. However, they will be blamed for the rats without getting to root of the problem or realizing that "leadership" is responsible. Fix the unsafe & disgusting food.

If the Citadel is to remain an icon and draw for Charleston, a close look and monitoring of the "new leadership" needs to take place. At this rate, the Honor, Integrity and Honesty along with the academics are going down the toilet. There is no respect for the Hitler leader of the Corp of cadets. Charleston would certainly make the national news if the Corp of Cadets walked off the parade field in protest to the Commandant.

The morale for sophomores, Juniors & Seniors is so low that they have lost the desire for the ring and to wear the ring as it now means nothing. This is not one class, but felt by all. The "honor" of wearing the ring is gone-there is no "honor" & honesty at the Citadel. When cadets feel the adult leadership cannot be trusted and is "dirty", they feel dirty.

This is a plea for review and investigation into the poor leadership by the Commandant. The future and viability of the Citadel is at risk.