General Paceâ€™s Commencement Address to The Citadel Class of 2006

Description

When: May 6th, 2006.

Where: The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina.

General Peter Pace, USMC

Who: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen Peter Pace, USMC

The text is here.

The audio (mp3) is here.

default watermark

Summary:

> First: Grow where you are planted. Some of you are going to go to jobs that were not your first choice. Some of you in the military will go into specialties that were not your first choiceâ€¦.
>
> Second: Check your moral compass frequently. I have seen it both in combat and in peace. If you do not know who you are walking into a situation, you may not like who you are when youâ€™re doneâ€¦.
>
> Third: Make decisionsâ€¦.
>
> Fourth and last, and this is the most basic: Take care of those in your charge. Whether youâ€™re fortunate to have one or a hundred or a thousand or whatever number of individuals it is who are looking to you for leadership. Do all in your power to understand what their needs are and as best you can to provide it for themâ€¦.

Now, in light of the Haditha mess, I believe General Pace would never be the one you could accuse of covering anything up:

> Second: Check your moral compass frequently. I have seen it both in combat and in peace. If you do not know who you are walking into a situation, you may not like who you are when youâ€™re done. When I was a lieutenant in Vietnam, I lost Lance Corporal Guido Ferranaro from Bethpage, New York, a 19-year-old Marine, to a sniperÃ¢â‚¬â€•the first Marine Iâ€™d ever lost in combat. I was filled with rage, and I called in an artillery strike on the village from which the sniper fired. Between the time that I called in the strike and the rounds were fired, my platoon sergeant didnâ€™t say a word, he just looked at me. And I realized I was doing

> the wrong thing, and I called off the artillery strike, and we did what we shouldâ€™ve done, which was to sweep through the village. And all we found in that village were women and children.
>
> I do not know how I could live with myself today if I had carried that first instinct forward. The time to decide who you are and what you will let yourself do is not when somebody gets shot, it is not when your wingman gets shot down, it is before you get in that situation so you have an anchor to hold on to. This applies elsewhere.

Quite a display of honesty, transparency and humility, Iâ€™d say, as well as a look into the character of a man who has been where the Marines of Haditha have been.

Category

1. Military

Date Created
June 4, 2006
Author
admin

default watermark