Reaction Paper

*The Seven Five*

Name

Affiliation

Date

Reaction Paper

*The Seven Five*

*The Seven Five* is a documentary film based on the real-life incident of police corruption, which took place during the era of the 1980s. The large scale police corruption happened in the seventy-fifth precinct of the New York Police Department. The main character of the corruption scandal was Michael Dowd, who was a police officer. The documentary film is directed by Tiller Russell and sheds light on the incidents of that time period, as well as utilize the footage from the Mollen Commission, which was actually an investigation panel that got the responsibility of investigating the case of large scale corruption scandal. The documentary film also includes the commentaries of Adam Diaz and Ken Eurell, who were partners of Dowd during different times, along with that of Dowd himself. The documentary film has revealed the detailed analysis of the corruption scandal in which Dowd, the police officer, joined hands with drug dealers and supported their activities while getting enough share from them. Moreover, he also robbed other small drug dealers, in order to maximize his business. He also accepted bribery, neglected his duty and informed the criminals about the raids, in addition to actively contributing to the murders and crime rate of the society during that era. Denial of victim and denial of injury may have been the major neutralization techniques adopted by Dowd; however, honesty and loyalty were the major ethical dilemmas the police officers faced during the corruption scandal.

The documentary film has highlighted the fact that the 1980s was the era of the cocaine epidemic in the United States of America. Seventy-fifth precinct of the New York police department, located in East New York, was the most dangerous area in terms of the crime rate. Michael Dowd was a part of that precinct and felt less desirable and appreciated in his job. He also faced the financial issues, so he utilized the opportunity of increased crime rate and drug dealing in the society to maximize his benefits. He started neglecting his duty and the morality of his job by accepting as well as demanding bribes from the drug dealers. After some time, he started protecting one of the drug dealers and ensured the success of his dealings. He informed him about the possible raids and used to rob other drug dealers. His partner was also involved in the corrupt activities with him, however, seeing the conditions of the investigation against police corruption in other precincts, he resigned from his job. After that, Ken Eurell became the next partner of Dowd and they carried on their acts of corruption, and drug dealing. Shortly, Dowd and his partner joined hands with another drug dealer named Adam Diaz, who not only trafficked drugs but was also responsible for murdering a great number of people. The corrupt police officers not only supported the actions of the criminal by providing him the secret details of the police raids but also trafficked his cocaine. In 1991, Dowd and Eurell were arrested after a prolonged investigation, however, were shortly released on bail. Dowd made the plan of another robbery by kidnapping a woman, in order to flee the country along with his partner, to which Eurell agreed but turned himself to the internal affairs at the moment, due to which Dowd was again arrested and had to go to jail, as his partner testified against him. After the arrest and sentence of Dowd, several other cases of police corruption in the other precincts of the city were also investigated and the guilty officers were punished according to the law (Russell, 2014).

According to the details provided in chapter seven of the book, the corrupt police officers utilize the techniques of neutralization, in their efforts of portraying a positive image of themselves, when they commit the unethical acts. The try to present the conditions of their unethical behavior to the society, in order to prove themselves right, as well as rights about their conduct and choice. In the case of Dowd, he utilized the neutralization techniques of denial of victim and denial of injury. Denial of the victim is one of the most important points in the case of Dowd and his partner as well, as they robbed the criminal drug dealers of the society. They robbed them on the basis that they deserve such kind of attitude and action against them, as they are not the rightful or law abiding citizens. They are already neglecting the law of the society and stealing or even robbing drugs form them cannot be accounted for by the law, because it is all illegal. Moreover, the corrupt police officers also did not care about the lives of the innocent people they murdered, as they thought that the victims also deserved such treatment, for being involved with drugs in one or the other way. The neutralization technique of denial of injury s applicable to the case of Dowd and his partner police officer in the way that they considered the victims guilty in any way. The drug dealers were not the law abiding citizens of the society, due to which they were not innocent enough to be considered the victims. The police officers thought that it is quite justifiable to rob them of their drugs, weapons, and money as well. They corrupt police officers were saving the society from the wrath of a number of different and small drug dealing groups. It was a positive action in their opinion as they maximized their benefit by lessening the suffering of the society at the hands of a number of small drug dealers (Pollock, & Williams, 2017).

In addition to the ethical issues of neutralization techniques, the corrupt police officers also faced the ethical dilemmas of honesty and loyalty. Honesty was the most important ethical dilemma in the case of Dowd, as he could not resist taking money from the drug dealers in order to maximize his benefits. He felt ignored by his superiors, as his efforts and services were not recognized and he was also not rewarded accordingly. So, he thought that he would not be able to make his position in the society by doing his duty honestly and tried to take the other way round, by helping the criminals and ensuring his benefits. Another issue in this regard is that the down did not only get the monetary gain from the drug dealers but was also recognized for helping them carry out their business activities. He was able to get the deserved recognition and appreciation for the wrong channel which is the most important reason that he kept dwelling in the criminal activities. The other ethical dilemma that is loyalty, is applicable to the documentary in the way that Dowd and his partner, both were involved in the corrupt activities and were not able to report each other due to their loyalty towards each other, as well as their willingness to commit the corruption, for the sake of maximizing their benefits. The police officers were not loyal to their job and responsibilities, however, they tried their best to stay loyal to each other, while committing the corrupt activities and supporting the criminals in their destructive activities (Pollock, & Williams, 2017).

The final observation of the leading source of the slippery path in the case of the documentary film is the low morale of the police officers, who did not get recognition of their services from their superiors, which lessened their chances of getting promoted as well. They were not able to resist the temptation of bribe during the financially difficult time of their lives, which resulted in their involvement in criminal activities. When they were able to get due recognition, as well as enough monetary benefits from the criminals, they utilized the opportunity to protect them, which actually meant securing their financial benefits. Although the involvement of the police officers in the corrupt activities was due to their financial needs, they could have resisted taking bribes and arrested the drug dealers in the society to get the due recognition and promotion (Pollock, & Williams, 2017).

*The Seven Five* provides a detailed analysis of the corrupt activities of the police officer of the New York police department during the era of the 1980s. Drug epidemic was one of the most important issues of the society, which boosted the crime rate, in addition to increasing the murder rate in society. The police officers of the seventy-fifth precinct supported the activities of the drug dealers, as well as actively helped them instead of taking action against them. The officers like Dowd used the neutralization techniques of denial of victim and denial of injury in order to keep their positive image rein the society. Moreover, they also faced the ethical dilemmas of honesty and loyalty which forced them to maximize their own befits, instead of trying to restore the peace and order of the society. The police officers should be provided with training and workshops which can help them to boost their morale and not get trapped by the offers of bribery but stay true to their service and oath.

References

Pollock, J. M., & Williams, H. E. (2017). Using ethical dilemmas in training police. *Braswell, McCarthy & McCarthy,(eds), Justice, crime, and ethics*.

Russell, T. (2014). *The Seven Five*. Sony Pictures.