Would you report fellow soldiers that commit war crimes?

Name

Institutional Affiliation

Date

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Everyone is supposed to respect the law. Respecting the law is a product of discipline, training, professionalism, and leadership (Schulzke, 2019). Various instruments of humanitarians' law and Geneva conventions work closely with army commanders to ensure that the law is respected (Skerker, Whetham, & Carrick, 2019). Thus, soldiers are taken through classes of being taught the law before going into the war fronts. Just as the soldiers get to be educated about the principle of attack and defense, so the law also needs to be taught.

On the other hand, war crimes are described as the law of armed conflicts that bring about individuals' criminal responsibility (Schulzke, 2019). However, if there is a severe violation of the law even when not at the international level, it can as well be considered as war crimes. All states in America have the power to try a person who has been involved in war crimes, without considering his nationality or even the place where he committed the crime. Every person who is part of the army is required to comply with the law (Skerker, Whetham, & Carrick, 2019). Commanders need to ensure that the law is not violated and take action if violations have been encountered. A soldier who carries an authorized order could be considered as committing a war crime if she was well aware of what she was doing. However, most soldiers are not always in the opposition of carrying out the various orders given by their commanders. Moreover, if a command from a commander tends to be unlawful, a soldier must refuse to execute it.

Most military organizations have been reported to have a lot of unethical issues. There has been a dilemma of what is considered moral and immoral behavior. Soldiers in different parts of the world have been accused of drug abuse, sexual assault, bribery, and inebriation (Schulzke, 2019). However, most of these organizations want to be still viewed by the public as perfect using the power and the influence they have. Each of the army organizations has a particular set of standard that every soldier is supposed to follow, thus giving them a shared value system which guides them in all situations (Olsthoorn, 2017). However, most soldiers can find themselves in positions of an ethical dilemma. Like in this case, whether a junior soldier should report war crimes committed by a commander or a person at a higher rank. Soldiers who find themselves in such situations should learn to apply various theories such as consequentialisms, which state that the result of an action is what determines whether it is good or not. Therefore, it is ethical for a junior soldier to report soldiers in higher ranks that commit war crimes.

However, every staff officer or soldier, even those that do not have an operational command responsibility, can be considered criminals if they learn of a war crime committed and failed to prevent it or was unable to report it to their commanders or superiors (Olsthoorn, 2017). Commanders are also held liable if they also don't get to know about the war crimes committed. Thus, all soldiers should make sure that they report all issues pertaining to crime wars to their commander to avoid being tried or being held responsible (Skerker, Whetham, & Carrick, 2019). The commander of the forces should always be in total control of the soldiers. However, there are various aspects in which the operational soldiers will always be in a dilemma and needing quick assistance (Olsthoorn, 2017). The only way that can ensure that soldiers don't commit war crimes is by making sure that they respect the law of armed conflict. They can quickly achieve this by ensuring that they are well versed with the rules that apply to each battle and the type of conflict. Commanders also need to start seeing the law as a need rather than viewing it as a hindrance.

**References**

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