



Local Ethics

While serving as an advisor to the Iraqi Army in June 2005, an Iraqi officer proudly announced that his unit had captured four insurgents three days earlier. When asked where they were, he replied "in my jail that I have created". After asking to see the detainees, the American officer was taken to an old generator room with concrete floors and walls with just one small 6 x 18 inch window with a grate over it. The door was locked with a padlock and being guarded by an Iraqi soldier. Upon entering, the American officer realized that the four detainees were stripped to their underwear, with their wrists and ankles tightly bound and their hands behind their backs, with hoods over their heads. They were lying on the concrete floor and had been eating from plates on the floor without their hands or utensils. Additionally, they had been beaten from their shoulders to their ankles and had black and blue marks like stripes on their triceps, backs, and behind their legs where they had been beaten with broom handles or clubs. They had large red welts from their shoulders to their calves and deep scratches that had bled slightly. When asked how did the soldiers know that these men were insurgents, they answered that the men (all Sunni Farmers) had cheered when their truck struck an IED that severely injured three soldiers (The soldiers were Shia).

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR SOLDIERS...

1. What are your courses of action? What factors would you consider when making your decision?
2. As an American Soldier, how does this incident make you feel?
3. What factors should you consider as you consider your courses of action?
4. How should American Soldiers *feel* when they see Iraqis abusing other Iraqis.
5. How should American Soldiers *react* when they see Iraqis abusing other Iraqis.

ACTUAL RESPONSE...

The officer immediately ordered that the detainees be untied, have their hoods removed and be given their clothing. After tactical questioning, it was determined that there was no evidence connecting the men to the IED at all. The officer arranged for their release after getting their information and reported the incident to his higher headquarters. He then discussed the incident with the Iraqi chain of command up to the brigade commander and used it to facilitate an OPD on civil rights.

