

S A T U R D A Y , M

## Dave Freeman Talks about Staying Steadfast and True Under Pressure



***"Let your good conscience and your oath to the Constitution be your faithful guide"***

In July of 1963 I was 20 years old and honorably discharged from the U.S. Army, having served almost three years with the 35th Combat Engineers Battalion at Fort Lewis, WA (except for a 5 month tour in France and Germany during the Berlin crisis when the Russians built the infamous wall which literally imprisoned the East Berliners) I traveled to Las Vegas, NV and took up residence with my brother who was employed by A.E.C. (Atomic Energy Commission) which shortly thereafter became known as D.O.E. (Department of Energy) at the notorious Mercury (Atomic) Test site.

A few months later when I turned 21 I applied for the job of Clark County Deputy Sheriff. The process was rather simple considering the Sheriff hired his own deputies and he fired them as well. The main obstacle to being hired was convincing a group of well seasoned sergeants and lieutenants, sitting on an "Oral Board" that you had the qualities they were looking for to serve with them as a deputy sheriff. Long story short, they gave me quite a grueling interview, but I earned their approval and was formally hired by the Sheriff.

In those early days, they issued you two pair of Summer and Winter uniforms, a five point deputy sheriff badge and an I. D. card, but I had to buy the rest of my equipment: S&W .357 mag. pistol (that we could ONLY load with 200 gr., 38 cal. cartridges) a Sam Brown leather belt with a holster, ammo pouch, cuff case and baton ring, all fastened to your trouser belt via leather double-snap keepers. They then told me to saddle up and report to the swing shift sergeant, who would assign me a senior partner to work with in the field (the famous Las Vegas Strip) until the next P.O.S.T. (Peace Officers Standards of Training) academy was scheduled.

I lucked out on my first swing shift by being assigned to one of the most experienced and

respected senior deputies on the C.C.S.O. Because he was a quiet and humble man (caused by, I think, confidence in one's ability to handle ANY SITUATION that might present itself) I didn't know he was one of the detectives that apprehended/arrested the Kansas killers depicted in Truman Capote's book: "In Cold Blood."

Once I had a few shifts under my belt, I was reassigned to another senior partner, where it was explained to me to adopt his good traits and discard any negative ones. Late into the shift, when things started to pick up, we were dispatched to the Flamingo Capri Hotel & Casino in regards to a 425 (suspicious person) involving three NMA's (Negro Male Adults) observed by security in the adjacent parking lot. As we rolled in we spotted three NMA's (that appeared to be physically supporting the man in the middle) slowly making their way through lot. We approached them and asked what they were doing and one of the support men, who was obviously sober, stated they were trying to get their friend home because he had too much to drink. We then requested they identify themselves formally and they complied using proper identification.

At this moment, a field sergeant drove up and gave a thumb-down hand signal, to which my senior partner acknowledged with a nod. As the sergeant drove off, I asked: "What was that all about" and he told me that the sergeant had just given the order that they should be "Hooked-up and taken to the county jail!" I asked: "what are we charging them with?" and he said: "N-O-S!" Not having yet learned all the police jargon, I said: "what does that mean" and he replied: "Nigger on the Strip." I literally bristled at that definition and told him: "I will assist you in getting them safely to jail, but I don't want my name of the arrest report!"

Apparently, he was quite surprised that a rookie would take that position. He told me if we didn't follow the sergeants order there would be hell to pay. I told him it just wasn't right and I remained steadfast. Then he asked me what I thought we should do and I said that I know I'm just a rookie, but if it were up to me I would F.I. them (field interrogation card) and kick them lose. After pondering my suggestion, we F.I.'d them and sent them home. We cleared our call on the radio with: "three F.I.'s collected" and immediately the sergeants voice boomed over the channel: "10-5 with me at the convention center, now!"

As we pulled up alongside of his cruiser, he motioned for us to get in. My partner got in the front seat and I got into the rear seat. Bellowing, the sergeant asked my partner: "didn't you see my hand signal?" and my partner replied that he had.

Still bellowing the sergeant said: "then why in the hell didn't you obey my order? My partner, trying to buy a little wiggle room, sheepishly said that we had thoroughly identified and checked the NMA's out and what with radio traffic picking up, we decided that by F.I.'ing them we could stay available for calls for service the rest of the shift.

The sergeant then turned to me and said because I was a rookie, I didn't have a say in the matter, but he still wanted to know what I thought. I told him that Yes, I was inexperienced in policies and procedures and maybe I was not the right man for this job, or maybe this job not right for me. He said nothing, so I asked if I could ask him a question and he nodded. I said: *"If those men had been white would you have given the order to arrest them?"* His face became livid with rage and he yelled at us: "Get the hell out of my vehicle and don't ever disobey my orders again!"

During the next thirty-one years of department service, there would be many more times when I bumped heads with my superiors, but I never let them intimidate me into doing anything that ran afoul of my principles or oath to see that everyone was treated equally under the law.

One incident that vividly comes to mind is when I requested a sit-down with my supervisor in front of his supervisor. There were many troubling issues that had been building up to the point that I needed to get them off my chest. I asked to speak uninterrupted and confronted my supervisor with several complaints (liability issues, police motorcycle safety issues, police equipment issues and personnel issues) that he had been avoiding discussing that I had been trying to resolve with him for quite some time. Thankfully, both ranking officers allowed me to vent from several pages in my pocket notebook and then I addressed my immediate supervisor with one final question: "Lieutenant, do you want the men to do your bidding because they fear you or because they respect you? He sarcastically replied: "That question doesn't even deserve an answer!" to which I replied: "Well sir, I just want you to know what I think about it." "The Lord is my Light and my Salvation, of whom should I be afraid?" [Psalms 27] After the sit-down the lieutenant led me into his office and fired me as the Departmental Motorcycle Instructor, but I had attained the

**catharsis I was seeking.**

**The Captain never took any action on the complaints I had lodged against the lieutenant. In fact on my next ER (evaluation report) the lieutenant marked me down in several supervisory categories and when I formally protested the degraded evaluation, the Captain ordered that he rewrite it (much to my surprise!)**

**I felt compelled to document this event that occurred in my first few days as a rookie deputy sheriff. And also, how these challenges continued periodically throughout my entire career (as recounted in the above paragraph). I thought it would help illustrate how some unethical (and sometimes bigoted) supervisors seek to intimidate their subordinates into carrying out unsafe orders (jeopardizing the safety of the troops) and worst of all: unlawful orders, thereby causing them to violate their constitutional oaths!**

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**Yours in Liberty & Fidelity,  
Dave Freeman  
Oath Keeper since 1960**



POSTED BY STEWART RHODES AT 2:40 PM 

*LABELS: DAVE FREEMAN, DEFENDER OF CONSTITUTION, OATH KEEPER PEACE OFFICER LIAISON, ORDERS WE WILL NOT OBEY. OATH KEEPERS, PATRIOT POLICE OFFICER*

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