

A significant criminal justice issue is the use of force. These issues are also considered in this chapter. a set of questions involving ethical issues, such as, anyone other than the state? Is the profit motive compatible with the state's right to punish through imprisonment? Does the existence of private prisons fuel a demand for further and greater levels of imprisonment? How do private prisons resolve ethical issues concerned with the use of force? These issues are also considered in this chapter.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is ethics important in criminal justice policy making? How do unethical and ethical policy-making decisions differ?
2. Explain the consequences that have resulted from one policy choice in the field of criminal justice, choosing from the following: the War on Drugs, truth in sentencing, sexual predators.
3. Discuss the ethics of the California law that gives prosecutors the right to decide whether the third-strike offense should be charged as a felony or a misdemeanor while providing no oversight of prosecutor charging decisions.
4. Outline the moral arguments against capital punishment.
5. How important is public opinion in criminal justice policy making? Explain by referencing two examples.
6. Why is it considered unethical by some for the state to abdicate its responsibility for the administration of prisons to private companies?
7. Comment on the ethics of prisoner disenfranchisement in light of the fact, for example, that if such disenfranchisement is permanent, more than 40% of the African American male population will have no say in the policies and laws that have a significant effect on them.

Web Resources

Center for Criminal Justice Policy Research. http://www.cj.neu.edu/center_for_criminal_justice_policy_research/index.php

Common Sense for Drug Policy. <http://www.csdp.org>

Criminal Justice Policy Coalition (also includes information on internships). <http://www.cjpc.org>

Criminal Justice Policy Foundation. <http://www.cjpf.org>

mentators have pointed out that, ethically, causing death or injury to civilians in countering terrorism seems to mirror the acts of the terrorists themselves.

Thus, the War on Terrorism can be seen as constituting a greater evil than terrorism itself. In the face of such charges, is it sufficient to maintain that citizens must rely on judicial and legislative oversight to ensure that the administration's excesses are corrected? Ultimately, the question may be whether condoning breaches of human rights and liberal principles in conducting a War on Terrorism also risks undermining respect for national and international laws that destroys foundational commitments to justice and human dignity.

Discussion Questions

1. The definition of *terrorism* is problematic. How does this affect our view of terrorism?
2. Which is the better approach—to treat terrorism as a criminal activity or to fight terrorists as if they were enemies in a war? Explain.
3. Does the Patriot Act give the executive branch of government too much power in pursuing terrorism? What effect does the exercise of that power have on civil rights in the United States?
4. What measures should a democratic government take to respond to terrorism that are consistent with its ethical responsibilities?
5. Is it ever ethically acceptable to torture a person in the War on Terrorism? Explain.
6. What, if any, human rights should be suppressed in the interests of winning the War on Terrorism, and how would suppressing these rights contribute toward "victory"?