

THE MONTH'S REPRINT

Survival Lies in Training

By Sergeant First Class Lloyd C. Pate



WHEN I took my basic training early in 1950, most people thought the next war was going to be fought with push-buttons, and public opinion was against rugged training for recruits. The bayonet was regarded as an obsolete weapon and not once during my fourteen weeks of basic did I so

much as see one.

Just eight months later I was under fire in an old-fashioned war in Korea. You can imagine my surprise when our first action turned out to be hand-to-hand fighting and the first North Korean I saw jumped up and was fixing to run me through with his obsolete bayonet.

By all the theories of the most advanced students of men's minds and motivations, Lloyd C. Pate, instead of resisting his Communist captors for two years, seven months and nineteen days, and organizing an unofficial group called "Pate's Reactionaries," could well have been a turncoat. A product of a broken home, battered and buffeted from place to place from early childhood, at thirteen he was a bartender of hootleg whiskey in a combination roadhouse-callhouse.

He completed nine grades of sporadic schooling and then in December 1949, a month before his sixteenth birthday, he told a recruiting officer he was seventeen, and enlisted in the Army. He went to Japan an MP, but after 25 June 1950 "goofed up" so as to be transferred to the infantry (because he wanted to make up for a favorite uncle who "had been turned out of the infantry with a dishonorable discharge") and went to Korea. There he was assigned to King Company, 19th Infantry (24th Division) and became an ammo bearer for a 57mm recoilless rifle. On 1 January 1951 he was captured by the Chinese Communists. He says he became a "reactionary" because he was "stubborn" and "didn't like a guy to stand over me and preach things I knew were a pack of lies." Last summer while in New York as a witness in the trial of Sergeant James C. Gallagher, he told the story of his life and his ordeal as a POW to a newspaperman, B. J. Cutler. The story in his own words was published in the New York Herald Tribune and

I didn't even know what to do with my bayonet. All I could do was step back and shoot him with my M1 rifle. This was a very bad tactic to use in hand-to-hand fighting because my rifle bullet went clear through the Gook. If there had been any GI's behind him, that bullet could have killed them.

It was thinking back over this incident and others like it that made me decide to stay in the Army after I came back to this country. I figured I had learned some things the hard way in combat and in prison camps that could save American lives in the next war and I re-enlisted to teach them to young soldiers.

In the beginning, when I began

to leave the hospital at Fort Jackson and went around to talk to GI's in training on the post, I came close to getting fed up with the Army. The recruits seemed to resent the Army for pulling them into service and taking from their civilian jobs. They thought training was a laugh and told me how they had got their noncoms and officers chewed out by writing home to their mothers, or to the Inspector General, or by crying on the chaplain's shoulder.

It's not the place of a sergeant to lecture the Army on how to do things or to tell the American people how to run their Army, but I wouldn't be honest if I didn't take this chance to tell an important thing I learned:

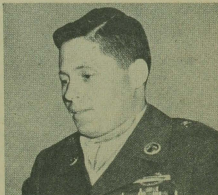
later expanded into the book Reactionary! from which the following article was drawn. The book reveals a tough-minded, resilient man utterly foreign to any degree of softness and dependence upon others. A man without much pity for weakness, but not indictive when confronted by it. When by accident he met Sergeant Gallagher at Governors Island before the court-martial began, he spoke to him as one soldier to another:

"I said, 'Hi, Gallagher, how you doing?"

"Okay, Pate," he said. 'How about you?"

"Aw, so-so," I said and walked away. There didn't seem to be any point in saying anything else. He knew why I was there and I knew what I had to do and that was it."

He has the same direct let's-not-



beat-around-the-bush attitude toward the training of Americans for war. That is his job today at Fort Jackson, S. C., where he is an instructor in an advanced leaders' school. In the article that follows, Sergeant Pate's plain-spoken arguments that training cannot be soft are brutally effective.

The Army is very capable of taking care of its men and teaching them how to survive in combat. This calls for rugged training and the public should not try to stop the Army from getting men ready in the ways it knows are best.

I'LL never forget one case of civilian interference. It was back in 1950 and things were pretty rugged in Korea. A brewing company back in the States told the Army it wanted to send some free beer to the men in Korea. And don't think we wouldn't have liked to come off the front lines and sit down for a few minutes to enjoy a beer.

The Army thought the idea was okay, but a bunch of women got their heads together and had their clubs and organizations jump all over the Army. "Don't send our boys beer," they said. "Send them fruit juices instead." And the Army did.

I hope some of these women read this. Because I feel they would be glad to know that we used their cans of fruit juice for target practice. This is just one example of the way that people who don't know a thing about it stick their noses into the business of the Army.

It happens in other ways. Say a man comes into the Army and he doesn't like it. He thinks it's too rough for him and he sits down and writes his mother a long sob story. She takes the letter to her preacher or women's clubs and they write to a Congressman. Then the politician writes to the commander of this boy's post. The letter gets passed right down the line until finally some noncom or junior officer

gets reprimanded for trying to make this boy learn something that may save his life later on.

What happens when this man gets into combat? He can't sit down and write a letter saying, "Mom, they're shooting at me." The mother can't write the Congressman and he won't write the enemy and say, "Stop shooting at that boy. He's a clean-cut American boy and he doesn't like to be shot at."

When this man gets into combat he's going to wonder why he wasn't taught in basic what he should know, why they didn't show him what to expect and what to do. And when the mother gets a missing-in-action telegram and the politician looks over the casualty lists, everybody is going to stop and wonder why.

FROM the end of 1953 to July of 1955, I was an instructor at Camp Gordon, Georgia. I taught technique of fire, squad tactics, scouting and patrolling—all important subjects. They not only can save a man's life, but a whole squad. We couldn't make the problems very realistic because the men were always writing home and telling how close they came to being killed. They were exaggerating the point, trying to sound big to the folks back home, but the folks back home were putting pressure on the Army.

Nobody in the Army today believes in abusing or maiming young soldiers. But sometimes they are mule-headed and you can't even use profanity in front of them without getting busted. There are some soldiers who will not do what you tell them no matter how many times you

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say it. I have seen one boot in the behind turn these men into the best damn soldiers you ever saw. The Army and they are better off for it, but it's against the law.

IT is no longer enough to teach a young soldier how to fight in combat. He should also know how to survive and how to behave in a prison camp if he ever gets captured. The Army learned a lot from the Korean War and our men are now getting better training in everything from bayonet fighting to how to resist Communist brainwashing.

There is the matter of food. A lot of soldiers, especially young recruits, gripe about Army chow. They say they don't like it and they sneak off to the PX to stuff themselves with hot dogs and soft drinks. This is a bad habit to let them get into because I know men who were trained that way who didn't come back from Korea because of it. A man should learn to eat what he gets.

The food in the Chinese prison camps was sorry. It was much worse than the slop a farmer feeds his hogs. But it would keep you alive if you ate it. You may have had to hold your nose but you could eat it. A lot of men wouldn't try. They said "I can't" because they didn't like the taste of the Chinese slop. And a lot of those men are still over there.

Another thing we can do in training is to discourage soldiers from running to their sergeants or lieutenants with tales about other men. Some non-coms will listen when a soldier rattles about another man and will thank him, but it is the

worst mistake we can make with young soldiers. The habits they get into in training are the habits they take into combat and captivity. And the man who carried tales in the States was the same man who rattled to the Chinks in prison camps. We can stop them from learning that kind of thing here.

ANY soldier captured by a Communist army can expect to undergo a period of brainwashing, which is just a new word for an old trick—to get a man to turn traitor against his country. When a soldier knows what to expect, he has a better chance of resisting the Communists. The Army must teach men the tricks the Chinese used in Korea because other Communist armies, if they get the chance, will probably use the same system.

The first thing the Communist do is put the men through a starvation period. As a general rule it lasts six months. They will admit that the food is bad and the medical care is worse. But they will blame it on the Americans and say they are bombing medical convoys and supply trains.

Their purpose during the starvation period is to kill off the weak and wounded soldiers. It isn't true that the Communists want to convert the weakest men. They want only the men with the strongest will to live to be left because they think they can make better Communist out of them.

All through these first six months they give short lectures on Communism, nothing very heavy. They start by telling about the bad points of

munists, others resisted them. The Chinks knew that the educated men were in the way of the indoctrination program, and those who wouldn't work with them were threatened into keeping their mouths shut. Education in itself didn't seem to have too much to do with whether a man turned progressive or reactionary. We had educated men and illiterates on both sides. But pride in themselves, and their country, or stubbornness in holding to their ideas, or just plain hate for the enemy kept most of the men straight that I knew.

In our camps there were some men who were ready to swing over to the Chinese even before the indoctrination program was really rolling. Back in the States and in the Army these men were brown-nosers, bullies and show-offs. All the Chinks had to do in Korea was give them a chance to show their true colors.

ON November 6, 1954, at Camp Gordon, the Army awarded me the Commendation Ribbon for the way I acted in the prison camps. I would have preferred to have won my decoration on the battlefield but I bring it up because the man who wrote the citation summed up how to resist the Communists better than I can. This is what he wrote; I admit it makes me very proud:

Sergeant Lloyd C. Pate, Infantry, United States Army, distinguished himself by meritorious service while a prisoner of war in North Korea.....He organized groups of fellow prisoners to disrupt attempts at Communist indoctrination and harass their instructors. Each time the groups were disbanded because of informants, Sergeant Pate formed other resistance groups.

He also personally and openly voiced his true opinions, punished confirmed informants and in other ways obstructed the

Communist indoctrination program. In spite of repeated severe punishment, he steadfastly defied all attempts at indoctrination and encouraged fellow prisoners of war to resist.

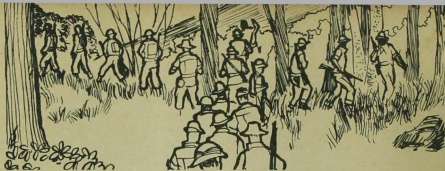
By his courageous example and leadership, he raised the morale of fellow prisoners, stiffened their resistance and contributed in great measure to the failure of the Communist program to convert prisoners of war to communism. Sergeant Pate's outstanding devotion to duty reflects credit upon himself and the military service.

SOME men in the prison camps thought that by co-operating with the communists they could improve their food and living conditions to a great extent, but they were wrong. The progressives in Korea sometimes got a few favors and a little better food, but nothing to make it worth while. The other prisoners could have got the same food if they'd stuck together.

I remember several times in the camps our food dropped way below average, and average was pretty bad. A large group of the prisoners got together and refused to eat the food or listen to the Communist lectures. The food immediately improved. This didn't happen just once or twice, but a number of times.

THE most important thing the Army can teach its soldiers about captivity is that they are stronger than the enemy if they stick together. The Chinks knew this and they were afraid of it. That's why they tried to set us against each other and it is why they backed down when we refused to eat their slop or listen to their lies.

From experience as a POW, I know that if soldiers stay together in every way, take care of their sick and weak, buck each other up when the going gets rough, and re-



sist the enemy in every way, he won't be able to brainwash or convert any one of them. He'll be sick and tired of prisoners who act that way and he'll want to get the war over sooner to get rid of them.

Not too long ago President Eisenhower issued a new code of conduct for prisoners of war. I agree with every word in it especially the part about not telling the enemy a damn thing except your name, age, rank and serial number. And one section in the code summed up how a man should feel:

If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

In the code, the President also said: I will never forget that I am an American fighting man, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.

WE didn't know these words when we were in Korea but many of us had that thought in mind all during our time in the prison camps. I know that at any time we wouldn't have been surprised to see Patton tanks come rolling over the hills after the Chinks. This thought helped us keep going.

The soldier who allows himself to be indoctrinated not only lets down his country, but he doesn't even win any respect from the enemy. I was

asked by several Chinese what had happened to the diehard American soldier of World War II. After seeing the way POW's were denying their country, the Chinks said they were ashamed to admit they had fought alongside the Americans in that war.

They had no use for the reactionaries—that's for sure. We meant trouble for them. But they never had as much contempt for us they had for the men who worked with them.

A MAN who is captured should remember he is still capable of fighting back even though he is a prisoner and no longer has his weapons. No matter how small a thing may seem, if he will go ahead and do it against the enemy, it may develop into something big. He must always be on the lookout for the chance to kill or harass the enemy. When the opportunity comes, he should be able and ready to make the most of it.

If we train our recruits in this way, if we teach them about old weapons like the bayonet and how to handle all the new ones, if we give the men training soldiers more authority, if we make the discipline strict and fair, the next time we need an Army we'll have fewer men taken prisoner and these will be men we can be proud of.

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