

# Boot Camp

(Continued from page 4)

The boot camp is patterned after the military style of physical training and strict discipline combined with hard labor. It is not meant to be easy; the term "shock probation" more aptly applies.

Prisoners are awakened each morning at 4 a.m. with reveille. Then they have 30 minutes to shower and clean their personal areas for inspection.

As in the military, prisoners must make their beds, shine their shoes and iron their clothes. After inspection, they march to the dining hall for breakfast.

At 6 a.m., the inmates line up in formation with their respective platoons. Each of the four platoons is commanded by a prison guard acting as platoon officer.

Afterward, they run in double-time about a mile to a remote location of the Goree Prison Farm to perform hard labor.

The hard labor consists of clearing the forest of pine trees at the back of the land. Prisoners are not supplied with power tools. They clear the land with pickaxes and hoes, called aggies.

The prisoners form lines and work to the cadence called out by the guards. Not a word is to be spoken, or the inmates will be disciplined. Large trees are cut down with two-man saws, and the stumps are removed with hoes and pickaxes. The limbs and brush are sorted into piles and burned.

After five hours of this strenuous work, the tools are loaded on trailers, and then the inmates again line up in formation. Under orders from the guards on horseback, the inmates run in double-time back to the camp.

Once they return, the prisoners are strip-searched and allowed to wash only their hands before lunch.

As Pitzeruse said, "They don't do enough work to warrant a shower."

The prisoners enter the dining hall one platoon at a time for safety reasons. They sidestep along the serving line and turn at

**"After boot camp, there is no second chance."**

**— Capt. J.J. Pitzeruse, Goree Boot Camp director**

right corners. Then they stand at attention until four are at a table and a guard directs them to sit down.

Only 20 minutes are given for eating, and silence must be maintained at all times. After the allotted time is finished, a guard instructs them again to stand at attention. They are then dismissed to another formation.

After lunch, the prisoners are given a short amount of free time. But the time is all but free. They must clean their cubicles, shine their shoes, and iron their clothes again.

At 1 p.m., the inmates practice their

close-order drills and marching techniques. The rag-tag platoons are groomed into precision marching teams under the guidance of the platoon officers.

Only one hour is allowed for drills, but not a minute is wasted. Inmates are pushed to their limits and yelled at repeatedly until the routines are performed to perfection.

At 2 p.m., inmates go to substance abuse classes and life-skills training. These classes are designed to rehabilitate the prisoners and guide them back into the mainstream of society.

"We've got to teach them something in addition to the physical activity," Pitzeruse said.

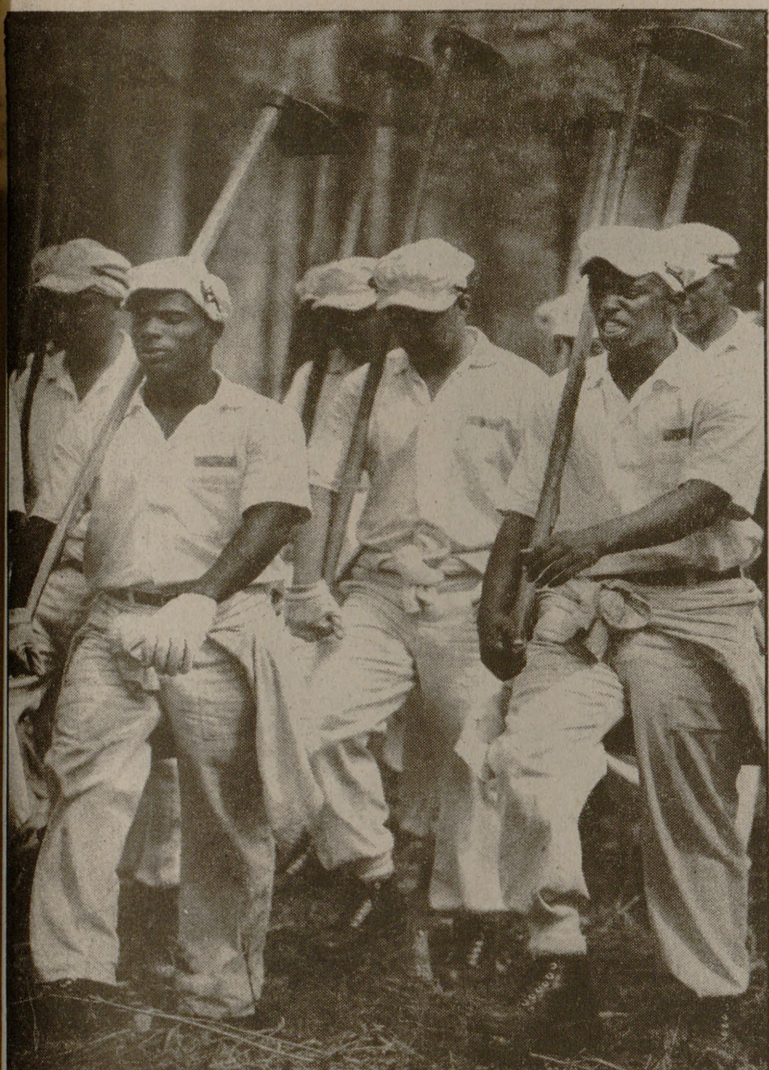
From 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., inmates perform physical training exercises which conclude with a two-mile run.

Then they are served dinner and finally allowed "free" time. Lights out is at 10 p.m.

The schedule isn't easy, but then prison isn't meant to be. The program at the Goree Boot Camp is designed to give young prisoners a chance to go through hell for a short time instead of serving many years behind bars.

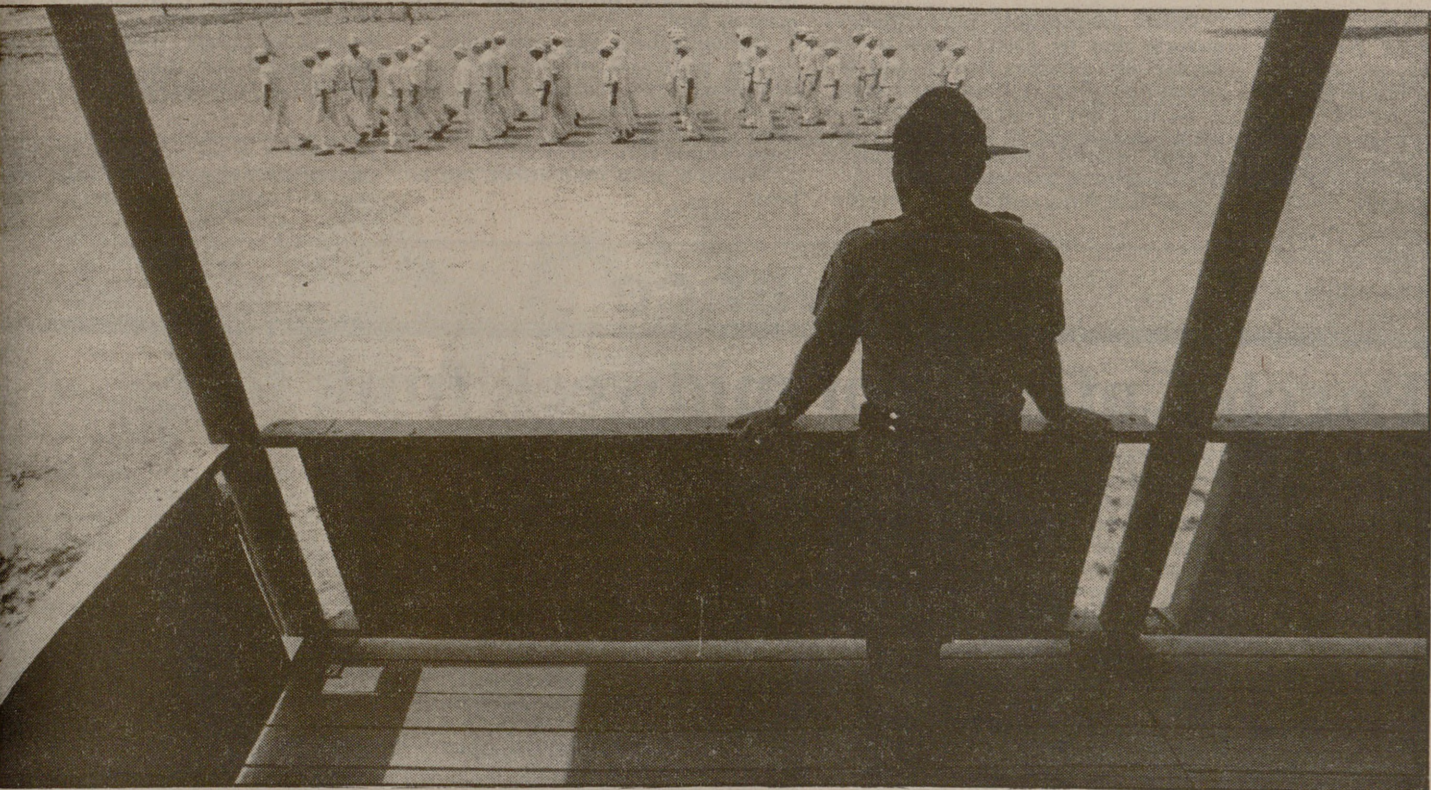
It is hoped that the prisoners learn to accept the fact that eventually, they will have to take orders from someone. If they decide to return to a life of crime, they will be sent to the "big house."

As Pitzeruse puts it, "After boot camp, there is no second chance."

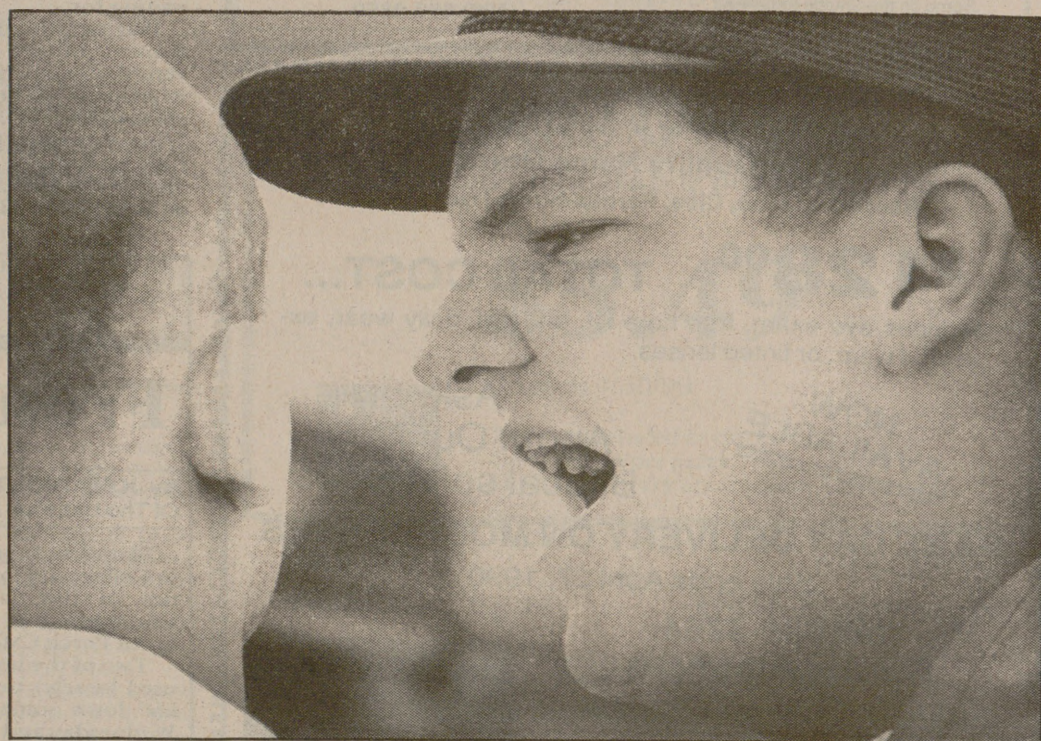


Above: Inmates carry the "tools of the trade," the hoes they use to clear brush and stumps. They call the hoes "aggies."

Below: A platoon of inmates marches in formation back to the camp.



Platoon officer Bobby Crowson directs his group of inmates through their daily drill routines.



Platoon officer Danny Bull "encourages" one of his inmates to straighten up and perform the drill routine correctly.