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THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND THE VIETNAM PRISONERS OF WAR

by

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8 April 1974

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THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND THE VIETNAM PRISONERS OF WAR

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PURPOSE: The purpose of this paper is to review the Code of Conduct in the perspective of the Vietnam prisoner of war experience and to recommend any changes that should be made to the code itself and to the training and indoctrination of the members of the Armed Forces in the Code of Conduct. Additionally, recommendations are presented for the education of the members of the Armed Forces and the U.S. public in order to minimize the use of POWS by future enemies as political hostages and propaganda vehicles.

DISCUSSION: The Vietnam conflict was the first test of the Code of Conduct. The majority of the American POWS was held captive longer than in any other war in which our country has been engaged. They were subjected to a wide range of physical and psychological pressures by the North Vietnamese in an attempt to provide the enemy with propaganda in order to bolster their war effort both in their country and in the world. Presently their are several groups which are considering possible revisions of or changes to the Code of Conduct. The paper discusses the Code of Conduct, article by article, and assesses its value and viability as they related to the Vietnam experience. The paper also discusses the need for education and training of the members of the Armed Forces and ways in which the U.S. government can minimize the enemy exploitation of prisoners of war.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. It is recommended that the Code of Conduct, Article III concerning escape should be changed to read, "I will make every <u>reasonable</u> effort to escape."

2. Articles of the Code concerning parole and the assumption of command need to be emphasized in training in the Code of Conduct.

3. Article V concerning name, rank, serial number, and date of birth should not be relaxed as it is important to maintain a strong posture in the face of the enemy.

4. The essentiality of leadership and communication in a POW environment must be emphasized in the training and indoctrination in the code.

5. More case studies and class room indoctrination should be implemented in the SERE schools instead of the unavoidable unrealistic "compound" type training now used in these schools.

6. All members of the Armed Forces should be informed of the nature of United States foreign policy if he is expected to risk

his life in defense of it. A program of education of all the Armed Forces in U.S. foreign policy is recommended.

7. The Code of Conduct was to a large degree responsible for the generally admirable record of the Vietnam POW. Their performance should provide ample justification for a Code of Conduct modified to a limited degree as the lessons of the Vietnam war may indicate.

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THE CODE OF CONDUCT AND THE VIETNAM PRISONERS OF WAR

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During the Korean War, the United States was confronted for the first time with communist exploitation of American prisoners of war (POWS) through propaganda and inhumane treatment. At the end of that war, when 21 American servicemen, who had been prisoners in North Korea, chose to live in China rather than return to their own country, the American public was shocked and the United States government embarassed. As the story of our prisoners in North Korea was told, we soon discovered the meaning of "brain-washing." Collaboration with the enemy by American servicemen in this war forced attention on the need for a new definition of the status and proper conduct of prisoners of war. A study group worked on this problem for more than a year. From this effort a doctrine evolved which was embodied in the Code of Conduct, promulgated on 17 August 1955 by the Department of Defense, the central feature of this new code was the concept that the American soldier in enemy hands was still "at war" with the enemy. Under this new doctrine an American fighting man had the responsibility to resist, harass, and inconvenience the enemy as much as possible. While this Code of Conduct had minimal legal basis, since it was not a federal statute, it has served the past 18 years as the standard of behavior for members of the United States Armed Forces who are held captive in times of war. Servicemen who fought in Vietnam were instructed in these standards during their basis training. Over five hundred American prisoners of war in North Vietnam lived under this Code; some for as long as eight years. The evidence is in. We are ready to evaluate the results.

The Vietnam war was the first large scale test of the new Code of Conduct. Now with the return to America of 565 prisoners of war we have first hand evidence of the results, and as a consequence the Department of Defense is giving serious consideration to revising the Code. Many people, both in and out of the military, feel that the Code is too strict, and that greater latitude of action and behavior should be granted to prisoners of war. Some say the Code is unrealistic and impossible to observe in many areas. Others reply that the conduct of the vast majority of the American prisoners of war in Vietnam, who actually used the Code of Conduct as a standard, was in keeping with the highest American values and was essentially reasonable for the American prisoners of war.

The purpose of this paper is: first, to describe the way in which the prisoners of war in North Vietnam utilized the code and how their experiences related to ; and second, to attempt to draw lessons from these experiences with recommendations for future training of American servicemen, for changes to the Code of Conduct, and for ways on educating the American public. Admittedly this paper may be written from a rather narrow, but personal, viewpoint wiout access to statistics that are needed to draw conclusions from case studies. However, the personal experience of one who has been a POW is of some value in an overall assessment of the Code of Conduct.

Before reviewing the specific circumstances and responses of American prisoners of war in North Vietnam, it is worth noting several factors that contribute to the complexity of this POW issue and dramatize its importance. The complexity results in part from the flagrant violations by most Communist governments of the Geneval Conventions of 1949 concerning treatment of POWS. It also arises from the new dimension in international conflict

which has derived from actions of POWS during the Korean and Vietnam wars. Article 85 of the Geneva Conventions, for the treatment of prisoners of war, clearly states, "Prisoners of war prosecuted under the laws of the detaining country for acts committed prior to capture shall retain the benefits of the Geneva Convention." Unfortunately, most of the communist countries when signing the Geneva Conventions have added caveats similar to the following by the Soviet Union: "The USSR does not consider itself bound by the obligation, which follows from Article 85, to extend the application of the convention to prisoners of war who have been convicted under the law of the detaining power in accordance with the principles of the Nuremburg trials, for war crimes, and crimes against humanity. It being understood that persons convicted of such crimes must be subject to the conditions obtaining in the country in question for those who undergo their punishment." As long as communist governments insist on the above interpretation of Article 85, American POWS in future conflict can expect similar treatment to that accorded the POWS in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

In recent years the world has frequently witnessed the use of prisoners of war as political pawns. Nations having truly representative government, which respect the right of the individual, are much more vulnerable to this form of blackmail then nations which place low value on the lives of their own armed forces. The first example of political exploitation of prisoners of war was in the Korean conflict. Now we have seen it in the Vietnam war, and more recently in the India-Pakistan conflict. The Arab-Israeli situation was exacerbated in 1974 by the refusal of Syria to repatriate or even account for Israeli prisoners of war.

RADM James B. Stockdale, USN wrote in Naval War College REview "The conditions under which American POWS existed have changed radically since World War II. It is no longer a matter of simply being shot into your parachute, going to a reasonably pleasant "Hogan's Heroes" prison camp and sitting out the war. At least it was not that way in Vietnam. In Vietnam the American POW did not suddenly find himself on the war's sidelines. Rather, he found himself on one of the major battlefronts - the propaganda battlefront."

Two and one-half million American fighting men served in the Vietnam conflict, and more importantly, 46,000 sacrificed their lives in the cause of that nation's right to determine its own future. Yet, in the latter stages of that war, millions of people were more actively concerned about the plight of 565 POWS in Hanoi than in any bigger issue of the war.

This relatively small number of men from a country with a population of 210 million were a matter of prime concern to the people and the government of the United States. As written in March to Calumny, "In all American wars, inordinate public and official attention has been paid to the death and suffering of prisoners of war, their heroism and cowardice, their loyalty and disloyalty, their selfishness and altruism relative to the concern toward the fate and behavior of men in battle."

There were several reasons for this new international spotlight on the POWS, First, it was due to American and Allied yearning to end the war under honorable conditions. This meant achieving release of American prisoners of war before halting the bombing. Second, the length of the war and lack of military victory disillusioned many Americans who thought of war as only a "win-lose" excercise.

Third, the courage of the POW families won the sympathy and admiration of the public. Fourth, President Johnson reversed his official policy of attempting to "win" the war. Finally, the world media poured out its message of the futile destruction of the Vietnamese people and their land.

In the nuclear age, successive United States Governments have advocated the solution of conflict by means of negotiated settlement. This has become an unstated national policy especially in those conflicts wherein the interests of the USSR were involved. "Unconditional surrender" has not been our stated objective since 1945. One result of this new policy of "negotiation" is that in the Korean and Vietnam wars prolonged negotiations have grown up over the POW issue. The Chinese at Panmunjon and the North Vietnamese in the recent Paris negotiations attempted to gain concessions from the United States in return for the release of the prisoners of war. The POWS of both wars could aptly be described as political hostages. In the Vietnam conflict U.S. national policy was remolded or at least influenced by the plight of an undetermined number of Americans held by Hanoi. In the latter years of that war millions of Americans wanted to bring them home at almost any cost. This sentiment culminated in the well meaning and deliberate statement by a presidential candidate that he would go to Hanoi on his knees and beg for the POWS. Some say it is possible that the prisoner issue may have had greater impact upon successful negotiations than actions by our combat forces. In 1972, the North Vietnamese negotiating position had evolved to simply "withdraw all U.S. troops from Vietnam and all prisoners of war will be returned." In other words, the proposal was to trade the United States presence in Southeast Asis for the return of the prisoners of war. In these

years, many congressional resolutions, favorable to the enemy, were based solely on the guaranteed return of Americans from North Vietnam.

The communists techniques have ranged from forced confessions of germ warfare during the Korean conflict, to forced confessions of war crimes in Vietnam. Their propaganda exploitation of the prisoners gained them sympathy in the United States and in the free world countries. At the same time, such propaganda boosted the morale of their own people, and strengthened their government. There is no doubt that the North Vietnamese were hoping to achieve their goals in Southeast Asis via the heavily slanted reporting and pure propaganda promulgated via the newspapers, radio, and TV in the U.S. In effect, they planned to win the war on the streets of San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, and Washington, D.C. the same way they won the Indo-China war with France in the streets of Paris. They succeeded in using the POWS as a major bargaining chip in achieving this goal.

On reflection, we can all recall highlights of the North Vietnam propaganda campaign: the "Hanoi Parade" of July 1966 when American prisoners were paraded, shackled together, down the streets of Hanoi through a screaming hysterical mob of North Vietnamese; phoney films of American POWS supposedly enjoying a Christmas service by their humane captors; the small "select" group of prisoners that met the anti-war delegations led by people like Jane Fonda and Ramsey Clark - who visited North Vietnam and returned to the United States to dutifully report that all was well with the American prisoners and that the POWS were enjoying a life of ease and luxury in the "Hanoi Hilton," Cdr. Richard Stratton reading a confession from behind a curtain (it was a

tape gained under torture) then being shown to the press gathered there and bowing 90 degrees four times. These are examples of how the North Vietnamese attempted, with some success, to use the prisoners of war for propaganda purposes.

In the following sections of this paper I plan to relate, as I remember it, the remarkable performance of most American prisoners of war in Vietnam, and to show how their performance was influenced by the Code of Conduct. Additionally, I will point out where I believe the Code is not sufficiently explicit or where it is not sufficiently flexible.

ARTICLE III IF I AM CAPTURED I WILL CONTINUE TO RESIST BY ALL MEANS AVAILABLE

The ability of a prisoner to resist rests to a great degree on intangible qualities which he has acquired before his capture. Among these are; belief in country, faith in God, love of family and physical stamina. There are some techniques and practices, however, which can be used to help resistance and to minimize the gains of the enemy. One of the most important factors in the ability of a prisoner to resist is communication. Some prisoners state that it is absolutely vital. It has at various times made the difference between collaboration and resistence, mental stability and insanity, heroism and cowardice. The North Vietnamese were perhaps better aware of the value of communication than were the prisoners. From 1965 to 1970 most prisoners were kept in individual cells or in small cells housing only two or three persons. All forms of communication between prisoners were strictly forbidden. Some of the most severe punishments were dealt out as a result of prisoners being apprehended while communicating. The camp authorities correctly equated communication with organization

and feared it with hysterical preoccupation.

In 1965, two naval officers, Lieutenant Commander Bob Shumaker and Captain Smitty Harris, developed a method of communicating called the "tap-code." This extremely simple code employed by tapping, sweeping, coughing, and writing was a mainstay of communications for the next seven years. Many POWS developed an ability to communicate by tapping almost as rapidly as they could by talking. This method of communication became known to the guards but there was no way they could fully suppress it. Most North Vietnam prison camps were staffed with some of the least effective members of the army; the exception being the political indoctrination officers. Thus, the American prisoners had one very important factor on their side; the prison guards were incredibly stupid.

There were many examples of the tremendous value of communication between prisoners. In "little Vegas," one building which housed about 15 prisoners, excellent inter-prison communications existed and the inmates of that building had high morales and performed in an outstanding manner. From dawn until dusk there was continuous communication among the POWS and much activity in that building. In another building, which was not more than ten feet away, lived a group which did not maintain communications. Their performance and morale could only be judged as unsatisfactory.

Psychologists say that after about 60 days of solitary confinement a human begins to suffer permanent mental deterioration. Some prisoners in North Vietnam underwent as much as four and one-half years, not all at one stretch, of solitary confinement and emerged mentally undamaged. This was a direct result of the communications maintained with other Americans while in solitary confinement.

Communications among POWS was desirable for an exchange of vital administrative information; but it was vital for the purpose of keeping morale high. The knowledge that there are other men undergoing similar experiences and emphathizing with fellow prisoners is of inestimable value. When an individual POW was in a situation of severe pressure or strain other POWS would take almost any risk to let him know that there were with him in mind and heart.

One of the standard methods to wear down a prisoner's resistence to their demands was the use of what could be described as "self-induced" punishment. That is to say, prisoners being ordered to sit, kneel, or stand for long periods of time deprived of rest or sleep. This form of torture, without laying a hand on a prisoner, was sometines very successful in breaking his will. These conditions of standing, kneeling, etc. were imposed by threats of more severe punishment if the prisoner refused. Through experience it was learned that the best course of action was to initially comply with the orders to kneel or stand until fatigue set in. Then, when the physical pain became extreme, but not physically damaging, the prisoners learned to gradually refuse to punish himself further. The important idea here is to force the enemy to punish the POW not for the prisoner to punish himself. An interesting psychological effect of "self-induced" torture is that the immediate source of discomfort is not the captor but the prisoner himself. Added to this are the threats of more severe torture if the prisoner does not comply with the orders of the interrogator. One of the most important lessons gained is that the feat of punishment was often worse than the actual punishment itself.

There is not doubt that the ability of the prisoners of war in Vietnam to resist was enhanced by their intense dislike of

the North Vietnamese. This was caused by their captors attempts to humiliate and degrade them. One example, was the camp regulations concerning bowing. The prisoners were required to bow whenever a North Vietnamese came in proximity. This aspect of the treatment by the North Vietnamese backfired on them and served to stiffen the resistence posture of the prisoners. Many ex-POWS have stated that due to the length and divisiveness of the Vietnam conflict, if the policy of the North Vietnamese towards the captured Americans had been of strict adherence to the Geneva Convention the North Vietnamese might have returned a group of men who would have been grateful and sympathetic to their problems in that part of the world. Instead, a dedicated group of anti-communists have emerged from that ordeal.

Physical condition has a great influence on the ability of a prisoner to resist. As opposed to the Japanese and Korean War experiences, most of the food provided by the North Vietnamese captors was adequate for maintenance of body weight and strength. However, there was a significant difference in the physical and sometimes mental condition of those men who made every effort to excercise and keep physically fit. Also, men who had previously engaged in contact sports were able to withstand physical torture better than those who had not. However, the mental frame of mind of a POW and his belief in his ability to resist was more important than his actual physical strength.

One important lesson learned was that if the communists felt that a prisoner could not be restored to an acceptable mental and physical condition they would remove him from the group and let him die. This was graphically illustrated in December of 1970 when all but four of the American prisoners were moved into large rooms for the first time. Those four men were suffering

from severe mental and physical problems. They were never seen again.

One of the key elements in resistence is leadership, a matter which will be addressed in article IV.

To most effectively resist when a prisoner of war, an American man has to undergo something of a change in basic instincts and values. Within our society. especially in the military, members practice honesty and openess. In order to survive as a prisoner one has to learn to lie, deceive, and steal. There are many adjustments a POW must make, not the least of which is to the actual living conditions. One of the most important is to adjust to dealing with ones captors. Communications is vital for organization and resistence. Simple communication methods must be taught to men who will enter combat. Physical and mental fitness must be maintained. Ways to minimize self-induced punishment must be taught.

ARTICLE III cont. I WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ESCAPE AND AID OTHERS TO ESCAPE...

The highest probability for a successful escape in Southest Asis was immediately after capture and before being taken to a prison camp, especially to Hanoi. Those few attempts, with the exception of Dieter Dengler's escape (which was from Laos) resulted from successful evasion techniques. In the prison camps the possibility of escape was very small. The most difficult aspect was the fact that the majority of the POWS were located in the middle of a city of a million and a half Asiatics. If they managed to scale the prison walls the chances for getting to an area where rescue was feasible, by U.S. or friendly forces, was practically

zero. In this environment, a successful escape was virtually impossible without outside help. In a communist society, having total control over its population, it is almost impossible to infiltrate personnel who could assist in an escape. However, this is not to disregard the fact that escapes are good for prisoner morale and it is the duty of all prisoners of war to attempt them. If only one or two POWS could have escaped during this period it would have been of inestimable value to the U.S. government and to the families of the prisoners of war.

In May of 1969, Captain John Dramesi USAF and Captain Ed Atterbury USAF escaped from the "Zoo," a camp in the city of Hanoi. It was a cleverly planned and well executed departure. However, they were captured the following morning. Upon return to the camp. Atterbury was beaten to death and Dramesi was subjected to the severest conditions for the next year and a half. Moreover, series of purges swept all the camps. Men were taken and tortured for possible escape plans, and communication within the camps was disrupted for long periods. Additionally, the quality and quantity of the food deteriorated, the frequency of inspection increased, and the general living conditions and treatment markedly worsened.

In the Hanoi prison complex the Senior Ranking Officer had the responsibility of granting final approval for any escape attempts. If he approved an escape attempt with little prospects of success, some of the POWS who were in poor condition might die as a result of the reprisals. Yet, he had to consider whether an escape should be attempted for the sake of morale or to demonstrate prisoner resolve to the North Vietnamese. Would the benefits of a success be worth the repercussions created? This was a subject of considerable controversy amongst the Hanoi prisoners. The policy finally decided upon was that, without outside help, no escape would be

attempted except "escapes of opportunity" (for example, a sudden chance presented while being transported from one camp to another.) Efforts to obtain outside help will not be discussed in this paper due to reasons of classification. However, suffice it to say that no American prisoners of war successfully escaped from a prison camp inside Hanoi.

Article III of the Code should be scrutinized with a view toward changing the wording to apply to the realities of the situation. The possibilities of success must be taken into consideration when an escape is to be attempted. In North Vietnam, the most severe punishment for an escape was meted out to the Senior Ranking Officers because the captors knew that a planned escape required the approval of the SRO. The knowledge of almost certain reprisal could lead to a certain degree of reluctance on the part of the SRO to approve of any escape attempt. To avoid this dilemma, the procedure might be that once the head of the escape committee and his members are appointed, the authority to grant approval for the escape be given to the head of the escape committee.

ARTICLE III cont. I WILL ACCEPT NEITHER PAROLE NOR SPECIAL FAVORS FROM THE ENEMY

The subject of parole surfaced to a great degree in this war. The North Vietnamese released four groups of three prisoners each from Hanoi. These releases began in February 1968 and continued at intervals until September 1972. All of the groups were handed over to anti-war groups that traveled to Hanoi to "take them home." In most cases, the communists received a maximum of favorable publicity and propaganda value from these "humane acts." The majority of those released were recently captured Americans, in good health, who had cooperated with their captors,

in many cases to an unbelievable degree. Probably the greatest shock to great numbers of the POWS was to find, on returning to the U.S., that POWS who were released early had not been court martialed but in fact had received choice assignments and early promotions.

It was the standard policy of the Senior Ranking Officers that in the case of release, sick and injured, enlisted personnel, and officers by order of "shoot-down" would go home in that order. Some of these early returnees accepted the North Vietnamese offer to return home early, knowing full well that there were other men in Hanoi who were in desperate need of medical attention, while they themselves were in excellent health.

The basic evil, however, was not that twelve men chose to leave their comrades in Hanoi, it was that the communists used the promise or prospect of parole to gain tremendous leverage on certain other prisoners. A few men were convinced by their captors that if they cooperated and showed a "good attitude" they would be the next to leave. They, in turn, cooperated much more than they otherwise would have in the hope of repatriation. The North Vietnamese very much wanted to see prisoners competing for the selection to go home. During the so-called release ceremony when the POWS were turned over to the "anti-war groups" many statements in support of North Vietnam, were made by these men which were played over the camp radio to the other POWS. These statements expressed disagreement with U.S. foreign policy, etc. and in one case contained an exhortation for the rest of the prisoners to cooperate with the camp authorities. These broadcasts within the prison produced a feeling of profound disgust in the majority of prisoners and strengthened their desire to return to the United

States only when the war was concluded on terms acceptable to the U.S. government. The reaction of the U.S. negotiators in Paris and other government officials to these releases was inexcusable. Instead of thanking the North Vietnamese thereby reinforcing the myth of their "humane and lenient policy," they should have asked simple questions like: "Why wasn't Alvarez (the first man shot down) released?" or, "Why weren't injured prisoners of war released?"

Perhaps to please their superiors, the camp interrogators attempted to get requests for amnesty from all of the prisoners. The vast majority refused to comply. A rather ludicrous spectacle ensued of prisoners being tortured to force them to thank the DRVN (Democratic Republic of Vietnam) for the kind and humane treatment they had received and to request amnesty.

It shoud be mentioned that one POW a Navy enlisted man, had permission from the camp Senior Ranking Officer to accept early repatriation. He made no statements damaging to the United States. Also, the efforts of Lt. Robert Frischman on behalf of the prisoners in exposing the true conditions to the American public were very helpful in focusing public attention on the prisoners of war and in gaining improved treatment and conditions in the camps.

The selection methods and process used by the North Vietnamese for those men they released points out the true inhumanity of their treatment and their willingness to go to any lengths for propaganda gains.

The insidious aspect of parole cannot be over emphasized. The North Vietnamese were successful in tempting a few POWS into cooperating with the prospect of an early repatriation.

In the training and indoctrination of American servicemen

in the code, the necessity for collective resistence to parole and the broad implications in the possible damage to morale of other prisoners of war must be emphasized.

The North Vietnamese attempted to use special favors as well as punishment to obtain cooperation from the prisoners. Extra food, letters from home, more outside time, bathing, reading materials and many other inducements were used to gain these goals. Many offers that were made seemed harmless on the surface. Yet each was another attempt to exploit the prisoners for propaganda purposes.

Some groups of men were offered the opportunity to draw pictures and were provided with drawing materials. Many of their pictures ended up in exhibits in Hanoi or Paris. Any outside activity such as volleyball or basketball would result in films being taken for propaganda purposes and then the athletics discontinued.

Even the receipt of packages from the prisoners' families was made untenable because the North Vietnamese wanted a signed receipt from the prisoner which not only listed the items to be received but also a long statement concerning the "humane and lenient" treatment policy of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam toward the captured "criminals."

The policy towards special favors was complicated by the fact that most of the things offered were required by the Geneva Convention. The thing that made them "special" was that all the prisoners were not allowed to receive them. A policy was promulgated by the Senior Ranking Officer which allowed certain groups to partake of whatever the offer was and if, after a certain length of time, the other men did not receive it, the group would refuse to continue it further. This course of action was necessary

because in 1971 and 1972, when the camp commander wanted to make some improvements in camp conditions, they always seemed to start with a few men on a trial basis.

The problem of special favors was an ever recurring one and the most significant lesson gained from it was that the communists never dispense a favor without expecting to be repaid in full.

In the training of members of the Armed Forces in the Code the insidious aspect of parole and the difficulty of dealing with special favors must be explained and techniques for dealing with various situations must be taught.

ARTICLE IV IF I BECOME A PRISONER OF WAR, I WILL KEEP FAITH WITH MY FELLOW PRISONERS. I WILL GIVE NO INFORMATION OR TAKE PART IN ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT BE HARMFUL TO MY COMRADES

The North Vietnamese made every effort to sow discord and mistrust among the prisoners. Shortly after a man was captured, the interrogators would show him statements and play tapes (95% of which were obtained by torture) which they purported to be voluntary statements of other men who had a "good attitude." A prisoner would always be informed that he was the only one in the camp who refused to cooperate. The captors continually attempted to make prisoners read the "news" over the camp radio; such "news" usually consisted of anti-war propaganda most of which was incredibly heavy handed. One of the most important lessons we learned is to believe that a fellow prisoner is not cooperating with the enemy until it is proven beyond any doubt that he is. Even then, the proper course of action we found, is to make every attempt to bring him back into the fold, not to condemn or reject him. When

communication is infrequent and conditions are severe, the tendency to mistrust fellow prisoners must be diligently supressed.

ARTICLE IV cont. ...IF I AM SENIOR I WILL TAKE COMMAND IF NOT, I WILL OBEY THE LAWFUL ORDERS OF THOSE APPOINTED OVER ME AND I WILL BACK THEM UP IN EVERY WAY

Leadership, along with communication is one of the most important aspects in the ability of prisoners of war to resist. In other wars, the senior officers were expected by their captors to excercise command and keep control of the other prisoners. Military organization was not only countenanced but encouraged.

The communists, on the other hand, employed the most intense efforts to prevent the excercise of leadership and the formation of POW organization. The usual statements of the denial of any rank due to the fact that POWS were "criminals" was used and the severest repercussions resulted from the disclosure of attempts at excerising leadership and providing guidance to other POWS.

Initially, the North Vietnamese felt they could prevent the excercise of leadership by simply using punishment and isolation. They soon found that it was nearly impossible to prevent the excercise of leadership as long as seniors had the ability or the desire to communicate. There were times in all of the camps when communications, therefore, leadership, was essentially non-existant. There were other times when senior officers were intimidated or tortured to the point where they refused to take command. Invariably, the laborious process of setting up sommunications and organization would always evolve. The North Vietnamese even went to far as to remove those whom they felt were dangerous

leaders to special punishment camps. Some of the most severe punishment was meted out to men like Stockdale, Risner, and Denton for their inspirational efforts at leadership. In late 1969 all Senior Officers and those considered "special" by virtue of their past records (escapes, etc.) were moved into one camp proving that the only way that the communists could prevent the excercise of leadership was to physically remove the senior officers from the proximity of junior ones. Even this tactic was unsuccessful as those men who were next in seniority took command in their absence; thereby continuing the chain of command the excercise of leadership. There existed a direct correlation between the amount of leadership and the level of resistence. In camps in which the POWS received little or no guidance, resistence was poor. In camps where strong and dynamic leadership was exercised, the reverse was true.

As the Code of Conduct gives only general outlines for behavior as a prisoner of war, it was deemed necessary by the Senior Ranking Officers to formulate more specific guidelines for prisoner behavior in the Vietnam environment. These "plums" as they were called, were the products of many years of experience in dealing with the North Vietnamese. The plums were simply elaborations of the code of conduct to fit specific situations that came up in North Vietnam. For example, one of the plums was a set of signals and courses of action initiated by the SRO to put up a united show of resistence. The "plums" were not modifications of the code. They served to increase the ability of the POWS to implement and live by the code. Falling within the guidelines of the code of conduct, the plums served as specific instructions in areas of resistence, behavior, and goals for the prisoners

of war in North Vietnam who were dubbed the "fourth composite allied wing." These plums were extremely helpful in enabling the prisoners to maintain a united level of resistence and behavior in the face of the enemy. The essential aspects of leadership in a POW situation must be emphasized in training. Leadership along with communications are the vital ingredients to successful resistence.

The Senior Ranking Officer in a prisoner of war situation has all of the responsibilities of any leader in combat and few of the assets that are so necessary to carry out his mission. The enemy made every attempt to prevent the Senior Ranking Officers from taking command. The enemy maintained in Vietnam and Korea that there was neither rank nor seniority amongst "captured criminals." Senior Officers who are in a position that could possibly lead to capture should be made fully aware of their added risks and responsibilities should they become prisoners of war.

ARTICLE IV cont. ...I WILL OBEY THE LAWFUL ORDERS OF THOSE APPOINTED ABOVE ME AND WILL BACK THEM UP IN EVERY WAY

The responsibilities and problems in a prisoner of war environment are probably the most difficult situations in all of leadership. In most cases in North Vietnam, the Senior Ranking Officers had no physical contact with their subordinates. Their chain of command communications links were tenuous at best and worst of all the captors not only refused to recognize any rank whatsoever, they made every effort to prevent any excercise of commmand. The Senior Officers knew that by ordering their subordinates to obey the code of conduct they were ordering them to undergo torture.

When an American fighting man becomes a prisoner of war it is absolutely essential that he carry out without question the lawful orders of his seniors. In situations like those in North Vietnam he does not have the ability to discuss the validity or legality of an instruction from his senior. The captors will use every means available to foment distrust and disobedience to Senior Officers as well as the code of conduct. Those few POWS who did not believe in the legality of the war or the validity of the code were extremely easy marks for communist propaganda. It should be clearly understood that becoming a prisoner of war is one of the risks in the military profession and the state of combat with the enemy changes only in location. The articles of the code of conduct and the "plums" promulgated by the Senior Officers would seem to many to be too restricted and even autocratic but experience has proven that they were the most effective methods of resisting the enemy.

ARTICLE V

I AM BOUND TO GIVE ONLY MY NAME, RANK, SERIAL NUMBER, DATE OF BIRTH. I WILL EVADE ANSWERING FURTHER QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF MY ABILITY.

This article in the Code of Conduct is the one that seems to be open to the most severe scrutiny and will be the one on which advocates of changing the Code of Conduct will most frequently focus their criticism.

It is patently obvious that if enough mental and physical pressure is applied in the proper manner, it is unlikely that any man can not be forced to submit to some degree. This is a lesson that was graphically illustrated during the Russian "purge" trials

in the thirities when men made statements in public courtrooms condemning themselves to certain death. However, it is absolutely essential for a prisoner of war as it is also true in any other person in life, to have a standard of behavior and conduct which he continually strives to attain and maintain. The article states additionally, "I will evade answering further question to the utmost of my ability." This should mean that a deviation from name, rank, serial number and date of birth does not necessarily mean that a prisoner of war has committed a violation of the code of conduct if he is temporarily forced to "fall back" from that position and has resisted to the best of his ability; that is the most our country should ask of him. However, it does give him a strong position to return to when he regains his physical and moral strength. It goes without saying that men are endowed with different moral and physical strengths and some men can be "broken" long before others; but the position of giving the enemy name, rank etc, is a common and definite position to strive to maintain and more importantly return to.

A number of persons have advocated that the POW should be given the freedom to tell the enemy a cover story or a "little" harmless information. This is a rather tricky course of action because it is extremely difficult to differentiate between what is useless and what is useful to the enemy. The overwhelming majority of the enemy efforts against the POWS in Vietnam and Korea, after the initial interrogations, was to gain propaganda material as opposed to military information. It was patently obvious that those men who did not cooperate with their captors in giving information, were left alone. On the other hand, there were men who were unable to, or did not desire to resist the efforts of the enemy and they were recalled time and time again for military information

and propaganda exploitation.

Perhaps the most crucial period in the POW's existence is during the initial interrogations after capture. It is at this point, an initial relationship is established with the enemy, that the communists will judge a prisoner to be cooperative or "reactionary." The reactionaries, being much more difficult to contend with are generally left along because the interrogators prefer to achieve their goals in the easiest manner possible. There were some prisoners who, after their initial interrogations were left alone, except for an occasional "attitude check" interrogation.

The majority of the prisoners of war in North Vietnam were well educated, professional, military men. By virture of their education and training it can be assumed that they were generally superior to the average infantryman that constituted the bulk of POWS captured in prior wars. Hence, the code of conduct should not be revised solely on the experience of the Vietnam war. It would be extremely difficult for the average infantryman to think of a cover story and to know exactly how much he can or can not give to the enemy in order to minimize the enemy gains. The American fighting man should, in my opinion, be given a concrete standard to which he can make every effort to adhere.

In training, it should be stressed that a POW should not allow himself to be completely "broken" in his adherence to the name, rank, etc. The training should include a strong admonition for the prisoner to deviate from name, rank, etc. at a point short of complete regression to the animal stage. While he can still think clearly and minimize the enemy's advantage. It has been amply proved that a prisoner will sometimes give the enemy far

more than is necessary if he is reduced to the point of abject submission. The proper method of resistence is to stop short of the breaking point, minimize the opponents advantage and be prepared to bounce back and win the next round.

Under conditions of fatigue, pain or severe debilitation, it is extremely difficult to differentiate between acceptable concessions to the enemy and unacceptable ones. Judgement is severely impaired under these conditions. If a prisoner is in conditions of severe stress, it is important for him to have a firm position to cling to and if necessary to return to. This position should be name, rank, serial number, and date of birth.

Obviously, there are many times when the prisoner of war can and should deviate from giving name, rank, etc. in his dealings with his captors. This is particularly true when a POW is the Senior Ranking Officer. The SRO has to press demands for better treatment for the other prisoners, medical care, better living conditions etc. to the enemy camp commander. It is during periods of interrogation or attempts at exploitation that a prisoner should try to maintain the name, rank, posture.

If it is believed necessary to relax this portion of the code and allow the prisoner to relax from the name, rank, etc. posture there could be a certain degree of incongruity with the rest of the code. Particularly the first two articles of the code which outline the standards of behavior expected of the American fighting man <u>before</u> capture. They state as follows:

ARTICLE I — I AM AN AMERICAN FIGHTING MAN. I SERVE IN THE FORCES WHICH GUARD MY COUNTRY AND OUR WAY OF LIFE. I AM PREPARED TO GIVE MY LIFE IN THEIR DEFENSE.

ARTICLE II I WILL NEVER SURRENDER OF MY OWN FREE WILL IF IN COMMAND I WILL NEVER SURRENDER MY MEN WHILE THEY STILL HAVE THE MEANS TO RESIST.

These are strong statements which essentially require a member of the Armed Forces to be ready to sacrifice his life if necessary and never surrender as long as he has the means to resist. If our nation expects this level of performance and sacrifice from its men in battle then this same standard should be maintained if he becomes a prisoner of war. The entire precept of the code is that an American fighting man is expected to continue to fight, harrass, and resist the enemy whether it be on the battlefield or in a prisoner of war camp. If a relaxed standard of the code, for a man in a prisoner of war status is adopted, then it may not be considered reasonable to expect a very high standard of behavior when he is in combat.

ARTICLE V cont. I WILL MAKE NO ORAL OR WRITTEN STATEMENTS DISLOYAL TO MY COUNTRY AND ITS ALLIES OR HARMFUL TO THEIR CAUSES

There are a number of advocates that propose that American prisoners of war should be allowed to make any statement that the enemy asks of them in order to avoid injury or serious discomfort. They state that the United States government should announce to the world that it considers that any propaganda statement made by a prisoner of war is considered to be gained by the enemy by means of torture or coercion. This position, on the surface, appears to be an extremely reasonable one, which would certainly ease the problems of a prisoner in his dealing with the enemy.

However, it is of the utmost importance to understand that communist propaganda is not directed solely at the United States and Western countries. Probably the bulk of the communist propaganda effort is directed at their own country, other communist countries, and theird world countries. The people of these countries, generally speaking, do not have access to statements from the open press of the free world.

The germ warfare confession gained by the Chinese in the Korean War had absolutely no impact in the United States but served as a great propaganda weapon for the Chinese. How many pwople in countries hostile to the United States understood that the United States disclaimed the statement signed by General Woodward in order to obtain the repatriation of the Pueblo crew?

The North Vietnamese used statements by U.S. pilots to substantiate their claims that they were winning the air war. They effectively used this propaganda to bolster the morale of their people and encourage them to greater effort and sacrifice.

In North Vietnam, time after time, the POWS proved that when they could no longer maintain the position of name, rank, serial number, and date of birth, they were still able to outwit their captors and not only minimize the communist gains but to detract from them.

As classic example of the capability was displayed by Commander Nels Tanner. Commander Tanner, after weeks of severe treatment, finally agreed to write a "confession of his crimes against the North Vietnamese people." His "confession" included his wing commander, Clark Kent, and his wingman Ben Casey. This confession, containing these names from American comic strips, was read at

the Bertrand Russell War Crimes Tribunal in Stockholm, where the North Vietnamese were laughed out of the room. Cdr. Tanner received severe reprisals for this embarassment but he was never again forced to write a statement, it appears they could not be sure that anything he wrote would not cause them similar embarassment.

Commander Richard Stratton was forced to make a false confession that he had been bombing the city of Hanoi and was taken to a press conference to appear as proof of these actions. The North Vietnamese were very interested in convincing Mr. Harrison Salisbury, who was visiting Hanoi, that the United States was bombing Hanoi at that time. Faced with an untenable situation Cdr. Stratton decided the only way he could discredit this effort was to bow, and bow in a manner that would show that he was certainly not in a natural condition.

Instead of the reaction that the North Vietnamese had anticipated, millions of Americans were convinced that Commander Stratton had been either beaten or drugged.

These examples and many others only show that despite the fact that a man is forced to fall back from the position of name, rank, serial number, and date of birth, he is still capable of outwitting the enemy so as to minimize their gains and even to hurt their efforts.

One of the unique aspects of the Vietnam prisoner of war experiences were the visits of various anti-war groups to North Vietnam; especially those from the United States.

It was correctly believed by the vast majority of the prisoners that these visits by anti-war groups generally served to hard the United States efforts in Southeast Asia; and specifically, to

give an incorrect picture of the conditions and treatment of the prisoners of war.

In the later years of the war, when more and more anti-war delegations came to Hanoi, the pressures exerted on the prisoners to appear before them increased greatly. Usually, the same group of about seven POWS, only two of whom had been captured before 1971, paraded before these "peace" groups. When a prisoner agreed to see a delegation he received a list of questions which the visitors would be allowed to ask and the answers were carefully rehearsed with the interrogators. If the prisoner deviated from these answers he was later punished.

An example of these repercussions can be illustrated by the case of Captain Larry Carrigan, USAF who was taken to see a "peace" group of three American women in December 1967. During the course of their discussion Capt. Carrigan strongly refuted these womens' assertion that the United States policy was to deliberately bomb schools, hospitals, churches, etc. At the close of the interview, one of the women stated to the North Vietnamese officer who was present, "that Capt. Carrigan was a wayward boy who needed to be straightened out." Captain Carrigan was indeed "straightened out." Approximately one hour later he was hung by his wrists and beaten, as a consequence he suffered a shoulder separation.

The fact that these "peace" groups were largely unsuccessful in exploiting the prisoners of war in their anti-war propaganda is largely due to the attitude and policies of the POWS towards them.

The communists were continuously asking the prisoners to write statements on every subject ranging from amnesty to the meaning of Christmas. They attempted to obtain these statements many times by initiating the interrogation with the evidence of

a real or imagined violation of the "camp regulations." To atone for this grievous crime against the Vietnamese people the prisoner was first required to apologize, then to confess to other crimes, and finally to send messages to fellow Americans or anti-war U.S. Senators comdemning the war. The emphasis was always on the "sincerity" of the statement and the rationale of the North Vietnamese in carrying out these tasks was so that the prisoner could show his "good attitude" and "repentenance" for his crimes. This good attitude was necessary even after a prolonged torture session.

The tremendous propaganda value to the enemy gained from statements made by POWS cannot be over emphasized and future POWS should make every effort to avoid making these concessions to the enemy.

ARTICLE VI

I WILL NEVER FORGET THAT I AM AN AMERICAN FIGHTING MAN, RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS AND DEDICATED TO THE PRINCIPLES WHICH MADE MY COUNTRY...

The words of the final article of the Code of Conduct sum up the purposes and goals of the document. In general, the overall behavior of the prisoners of war in Vietnam using the code as a guide is a justification for its being and a vindication for all the efforts that were devoted to its implementation. It is the trust in God and Country that motivates a man to return to certain torture ten or fifteen times in order to prevent the enemy from using him to harm the goals of his nation. It is trust in God and Country that enables a man to reject an offer of repatriation because he knows how damaging it would be to his fellow POWS and a blot on the honor of his family, service, and country. It is faith in God and Country that strengthens

a man's will to continue to communicate with and encourage his fellow POWS despite the knowledge of almost certain reprisals. It is trust in God and Country that kept alive the certain knowledge in their hearts that the United States of America had not forgotten them and would some day bring them home - home with honor.

But what about those men who did not keep the faith with their country or their fellow prisoners? Charges were preferred against two officers and seven enlisted men. Probably more would have been charged if the Vietnam war had been like others in which this country has been engaged.

There was a discernible difference in the attitudes of those POWS who were captured during the 1965-68 time frame and those who were captured in the last stages of the war. Why? Because the latter group had been exposed to the divisive forces which had come into focus as a result of the anti-war movement in the United States.

"A man cannot fight with a tarnished shield" The biggest factor in a man's ability to perform creditably as a prisoner of war is a strong belief in the correctness of his nations foreign policy. Too many men in the Armed Forces of the United States do not understand what this nations foreign policy is. It is encumbent upon the Armed Forces before sending its members to fight, and possibly die, to inform them as to the nature of the foreign policy and goals of the United States of America. This is not to advocate a General Walker type "indoctrination" or an extensive course in international relations but a simple, straightforward, explanation of the foreign policy of the United States. A program of this nature could be construed as "brain washing"

or "thought control" and could be a target for a great deal of criticism. But if a program of this nature was well formulated and professionally executed it would be of inestimable value, not only to future prisoners of war, but also to the benefit of the Armed Forces in time of both peace and war. The day of the "charge of the light brigade" is over. The youth of America require and deserve an explanation for the requirements for them to serve, and if called upon, to sacrifice for their country. A program of this nature could be commenced in basic training and could be continued on as many other training programs are in the Armed Forces. The basic instincts of the American youth are good and if properly motivated, they can still rank with the best fighting men in the history of the world.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

My evaluation of the code in the light of the Vietnam prisoners experiences is threefold. First, the Code needs to be reviewed by a highly respected board of citizens in order to make a comprehensive evaluation of the Vietnam experience, to consider future wars in which American Servicemen may be captured, and to recommend desireable changes to the Code. Second, the American government needs to periodically explain to its people, young and old, some basic facts of its foreign policy. Third, the Defense Department needs to educate every member of the Armed Forces in the principles of the Code in such a clearly understandable fashion that he will have minimal doubts as to how to observe the Code if ever captured. In the following paragraphs I propose to elaborate on each of these three recommendations.

The Vietnam experience proved the Code of Conduct to be an

effective and viable set of guidelines to aid prisoners of war in their resistence to the enemy. Such a Code will be extremely useful in future conflicts and should remain general in nature in order to be useful in all situations. With different circumstances elaborations of the code as was done with the "plums in North Vietnam can be utilized to enhance the value of the code to fit specific problem areas. The article concerning the position of giving only name, rank etc. is an appropriate position for a POW to take as his initial stand after capture. This by no means indicates that the POW is not allowed to speak to his captors on a variety of subjects (health, food, medicine, etc.) particularly if he is the Senior Ranking Officer. What it does mean is that this is a position to take to prevent the enemy from gaining military information or propaganda exploitation but not to be held until death or severe incapacitation. It should be reemphasized that in war most prisoners are relatively uneducated and unsophisticated. Also the ability to use correct judgment in any man deteriorates rapidly under conditions of severe physical and mental stress. POWS must be provided with a clear firm position from which to base their dealings with the enemy.

The question of escape is one which needs to be evaluated carefully. Is it worthwhile to attempt an escape without any realistic prospect of success, knowing that other men may die as a consequence? This section of the Code should probably be rephrased to read "I will make every reasonable effort to escape..."

The evils of parole and amnesty must be emphasized in the training of American fighting men. Not just in the light of the dishonorable aspects of the act itself, but the very serious impact upon the morale of the POWS who remain behind, and the tremendous propaganda value to the enemy gained by the release

of a few men.

The ability of and the ways in which a prisoner can resist the enemy is one which requires the most emphasis. The American people have been innolulated with too many John Wayne movies and other examples of unbreakable will and super human strength. It has been amply proved that every man has a breaking point. Yet, the fact that a man has reached this point does not mean that he can't minimize the enemy gains and counteract them. The prisoners of war in North Vietnam may have lost some skirmishes but they won the propaganda and psychological battle.

The vital essentiality of communication and leadership in the prisoner of war situation cannot be over stressed. These are the two key factors in successful resistence and they should receive a maximum amount of emphasis in code of conduct training.

In order for this nation to have men who perform creditably in combat as well as in prison, American fighting men must receive training and education not in the code of conduct alone, but in the principles and policies that have made this country a model for freedom loving people to emulate. A program of education for our Armed Forces as to the principles of democracy and current foreign policy needs to be established and vigorously prosecuted.

The code of conduct should be made a legal document with violators made liable to trial and punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. If it is a standard for good behavior and conduct there should be a penalty for failure to comply with it. The decisions of the Secretaries of the Navy and Army not to prosecute the men charged with far more serious acts than violations of the Code could set a serious example for men who may be motivated to collaborate in future situations. Punishment, or threat of

punishment is sometimes the only method that can motivate certain individuals.

The Vietnam war was the first test of the code of conduct. During the years of incarceration the Vietnam prisoners of war used the code of conduct as their guiding star. Amplification and elaborations to the code in order to fit certain situations were made in the form of the "plums." The plums were in no way a denial or negation of the code, they served to provide specific guidance in the situations that existed in order for the prisoners of war to comply with the code of conduct.

EDUCATION OF AMERICAN PEOPLE IN STATUS OF PRISONERS OF WAR

It should also be explained to the American people that in all wars men become prisoners, and although it is the duty of our country to do everything possible to bring about the return of those prisoners; by no means should the existence of prisoners of war substantially influence or effect national policy. Becoming a prisoner of war is a risk that a soldier must take and is one of the liabilities inherent in the profession of bearing arms.

It is obvious any American fighting man who falls into the hands of amy communist country can expect to be the object of attempts at propaganda exploitation and to be held as a political hostage. The first step needed to remedy this probability is to focus world attention on the fact that the communist nations by adding the sentence to the Geneva Convention by their signature referred to earlier in this paper, have no intentions of abiding by the Geneva Convention. The United States can be an extremely useful forum for bringing pressure to bear on them. Even if the communist countries do remove the caveat next to their signature we cannot fully expect them to abide by the Geneva convention.

If their past record is an indication, they will not necessarily abide by their agreements if they feel it is not to their advantage to do so.

In the future, if a communist captor country begins to release propaganda statements reported to be made by American prisoners of war in the interests of achieving their propaganda objectives, the United States government should have a stated national policy that our country considers any statement made by a prisoner of war that is disloyal to his country has been gained through brutal, inhuman, and unethical treatment by his captors. The United States cannot maintain the position that all of its men who became prisoners of war are able to maintain a completely successful resistence posture. Instead of expecting total resistence by the prisoners of war, the United States should attack the communists as we did the North Vietnamese in the later stages of the Vietnam conflict for directly violating the Geneva convention and utilizing methods which would attempt to subvert the loyalty and patriotism of captured fighting men. The tremendous effort mounted by the Nixon administration and millions of Americans in behalf of the prisoners of war in Vietnam is directly responsible for the radical improvements in the treatment of the Vietnam POWS beginning in late 1969. Many prisoners of war who returned to the United States in 1973 in all probability would never have survived if that change had not taken place.

This, however, will not relieve the POW of the burden of resisting the enemy's attempts at exploitation for propaganda purposes. The communists use propaganda in order to influence their own people and other nations who do not have access to the media of the "free world."

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION

Presently, there are various Armed Forces SERE (survival, escape, resistence, and evasion) schools located in various parts of the United States and overseas. There are some major deficiencies in the training provided by these schools.

A large amount of the emphasis in the SERE Schools is devoted to living in a compound situation in which the students are treated to an unrealistic set of circumstances which are beyond the control of the school itself. First the school is for a limited duration which gives the trainee the certain knowledge of a fixed termination date to whatever circumstances he might be undergoing. Second, the trainee has the certitude that he will not be severly injured no matter how serious the threats become or how uncomfortable he may be. Thirdly, during the bulk of the compound environment the trainees are generally in contact with their comrades, with only the senior officers being removed to isolation and then for punishment purposes. The time and energy devoted to what must always be a basically unrealistic situation could be far better utilized by the use of films, lectures, and case studies attempting to present the total picture of the prison experience; its stresses, successes and failures. American fighting men can be taught that prisoners through faith, communication, and leadership can not only resist the attempts of the enemy to exploit them but also actually defeat him. Along with this training, the examples mentioned in this article and many others should be utilized to illustrate the inestimable value of faith in ones fellow Americans both in prison and back in the United States. This includes a complete understanding of weaknesses as well as strengths, failings as well as successes and most important of all, the necessity to forgive. One of the factors to be most heavily stressed is

despite situations of physical separation, group strength is a key to successful resistence and every effort should be made to maintain it.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The training and indoctrination in the Code of Conduct provided to the POWS prior to their capture was to a large degree responsible for their generally admirable record. The Code proved to be of value not only to the nation but also to the individuals.

Based on the overall performance of the POWS in North Vietnam the Code of Conduct was of tremendous value in providing them with guidance and standards of behavior. This performance should be in itself ample justification for the continuence of a Code of Conduct, modified to a limited degree as the lessons of the Vietnam war may indicate.

Feb. 1967

In accordance with the prevailing situation in the camp and following the recent education program of the criminals about the policy toward them and based on:

1. The policy toward the American criminals already issued.
2. The provisions of detaining the blackest criminals in the D.R.V.N.
3. The inspection and impletation of the camp regulations by the criminals in the past, and
4. In order to insure the proper execution of the regulations the camp commander has decided to issue the following new regulations which have been modified and augmented to reflect the new conditions, from now on the criminals must strictly follow and abide by the following provisions:

"The criminals are under an obligation to give full and clear written or oral answers to all questions raised by the camp authorities." All atempts and tricks intended to evade answering further questions and acts directed to opposition by refusing to answer any questions will be considered manifistations of obstinancy and antagonism which deserves strict punishment.

The criminals must absolutely abide by and seriously obey all orders and instructions from the Vietnamese officers and guards in the camp.

The criminals must demonstrate a cautious and polite attitude the officers and guards in the camp and must render greetings when met by them in a manner all ready determined by the camp authorities. When the Vietnamese Officers and Guards come to the rooms for inspection or when they are required by the camp officer to come to the office room, the criminal must carefully and neatly put on their clothes, stand attention, bow a greeting and await further orders. They may sit down only when permission is granted.

The criminal must maintain silence in the detention rooms and not make any loud noises which can be heard outside. "All schemes and attempts to gain information and achieve communication with the criminals living next door by intentionally talking loudly, tapping on walls, or by other means will be strictly punished."

If any criminal is allowed to ask a question he is allowed to say softly only the words "bao cao." The guard will report this to the officer in charge.

The criminals are not allowed to bring into and keep in their rooms anything that has not been so approved by the camp authorities.

The criminals must keep their rooms clean and must take care of everything given to them by the camp authorities.

The criminals must go to bed and arise in accordance with the orders signaled by the gong.

During alerts the criminals must take shelter without delay, if no foxhole is available tney must go under their beds and lay close to the wall.

When a criminal gets sick he must report it to the guard who will notify the medical personnel. The medical personnel will come to see the sick and give him medicine or send him to the hospital if necessary.

When allowed outside for any reason each criminal is expected to walk only in the areas as limited by the guards-in-charge and seriously follow his instruction.

Any obstinacy or opposition, violation of the proceeding provisions, or any scheme or attempt to get out of the detention camp without permission are all punishable. On the other hand any criminal who strictly obeys the camp regulations and shows his true submission and repentance by his practical acts will be allowed to enjoy the humane treatment he deserves.

Anyone so imbued with a sense of preventing violations and who reveals the identity of those who attempt to act in violation of the forgoing provisions will be properly rewarded. However, if and criminal is aware of any violation and deliberately tries to cover it up, he will be strictly punished when this is discovered.

In order to assure the proper execution of the regulations, all the criminals in any detention room must be held responsible for any and all violations of the regulations committed in their room.

Signed
The Camp Commander
15 February 1969

(Additions and or Changes)

It is forbidden to talk or make any writing on the walls in the bathrooms or communicate with criminals in other bathrooms by any other means.

He or who escapes or tries to escape from the camp and his (their) accomplice (s) will be seriously punished.

CODE OF CONDUCT

I

I am an American fighting man. I serve in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

II

I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command I will never surrender my men while they still have the means to resist.

III

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.

IV

If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information or take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am Senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

V

When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am bound to give only name, rank, service number and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

VI

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.